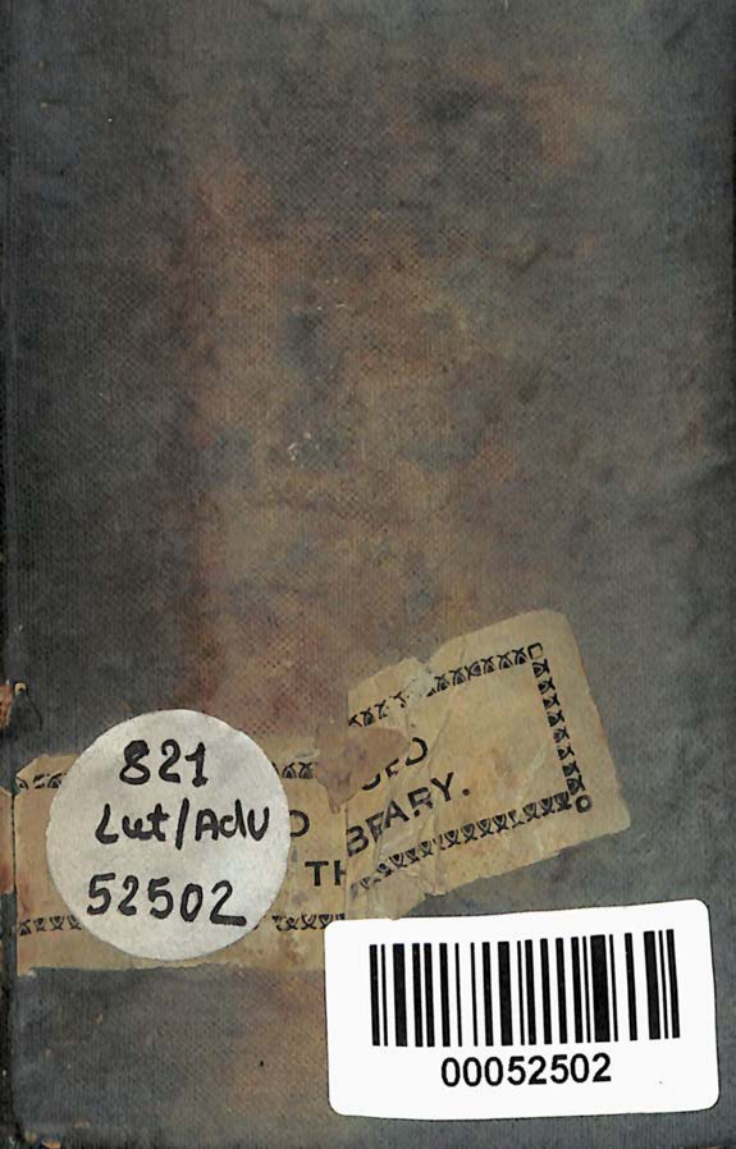
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ADVICE TO JULIA.

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LETTER IN RHYME.

J'ai vu les mœurs de mon tems, et j'ai publié cette lettre. ROUSSEAU.

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Introduction——Hyde Park——The Ride——The Promenade——Almack's——The Opera——Newmarket——News of the Day——Sketch of a Small-talker——The Park on Sundays——A Shower——Kensington-Gardens——Sparring——The Serpentine—in winter—in summer——A Submissive Lover——The Mysteries of Dress——Importance of the Cravat——An Apostate Beau——A modern Dinner——The Ball-Room at Almack's——Waltzing——Quadrilling——Rules and Regulations——A Ball of other Times——A Guide to Matrimony——Cautions to younger Brothers——The French Play——Paris——The Palais-Royal——Spectacles——Scene on the Boulevards—time, evening——The Tuilleries-Gardens——Parisian Belles——A Protest against Cachemires——Maisons de Jeu——London——Its Independence, Variety; Equality——Its Display of female Beauty——End of the London Season——Signs and Prodigies forerunning it——A hot Day in August——A Water-party——A Steam-boat on the Thames——Brighton——Autumn and Winter in the Country——Shooting——Hunting——The House of Commons——Debts and Doubts of a Man of Fashion——Thoughts on Marriage and the Press——Conclusion.

ADVICE TO JULIA.

ADVICE TO JULIA.

COME, tell me, JULIA,—come, confess
A secret which, perhaps, I guess;
Why have you thus poor CHARLES undone?[1]
Is it from avarice, or for fun?
Or do you play these pranks to prove
What arrant dupes are men in love?
For never handsome gipsy drew in
A man so soon to shame and ruin;
Nor managed, between gall and honey,
Greedy, yet prodigal of money,

To wear the flesh at such a rate
From the bare bones of his estate.—
Speak—answer me—you must, and shall.

" Well then,—' 'tis my vocation, Hal;'
" And wisely used is every minute
" Of youth and health in labouring in it.
" How have I tittered, when that fellow
" Iago tells the Moor Othello,
" With face so plausible, that cash,
" The idol of the world, is trash;
" And swears he has no kindred feeling
" With those who think it worth the stealing.
" The rogue, intending to blindfold him,
" Cared not a straw what lies he told him,
" But *this* I count, among the many,
" By far the greatest lie of any.
" Enough to squander or to save
" Of trash like this is all *I* crave.

" *My* maxim's in a word expressed—
" Young birds should feather well their nest;
" And so, do I maintain, should lasses,
" Ere their warm spring and summer passes,
" While precious in your sex's eye
" Is early bloom and novelty.
" Soon Autumn on our charms encroaches;
" Soon Winter's icy hand approaches;
" Then unregarded we complain,
" And plead to man's cold heart in vain!
" While such the melancholy fact is,
" Such are my principles and practice."

Thus would you answer, were you present,
Methinks, with looks half cross, half pleasant.
Well, stoutly have you battled for it; I
Cannot but yield, to such authority,
That women, in their own defence,
Plunder with perfect innocence.

But, Julia, though I'm loth to scold
A frail one for her love of *gold*,
I must, howe'er your features lour,
Make war upon her love of *power*,
A rage more mischievous and worse:—
Sure 'tis enough to drain his purse.
Why will you thus monopolize
His words and thoughts, his ears and eyes?
Why rob him of a dearer treasure
In every moment of his leisure?

No, never have I known a change
In man so sudden and so strange;
A revolution so entire
In every habit and desire.
Time was, he minded not a feather [2]
If it was bright or cloudy weather,
Nor what Moore's Almanack foretold
Of wind or rain, of heat or cold;

But joined his cronies in the Park,
" Fellows of likelihood and mark,"
In trot or canter, on the backs
Of ponies, hunters, chargers, hacks,
Proud to display their riders' graces
Through all imaginable paces,
From walks and ambles up to races;
Or on an Andalusian barb (3).
Alone, in military garb,
With shoulders duly braced, and back'd head,
And regimental air, contracted
On service in his last campaign,
From overrunning France and Spain,
Guided, with skilful, gentle force,
Each motion of his managed horse,
By dint of leather and of steel,
His bridle up, or down his heel;
Now dashing on, now lounging slow,
Through the thronged ride, to Rotten Row;

Where ancient gentlemen come forth,
Screened from the breezes of the north,
To bask them in the province won
From Winter by the southern sun;
When birds on leafless branches sing,
And the last days of April bring
A lame apology from Spring.
There, on their easy saddles, pumping
Fresh air into their lungs by bumping,
Under the lee of wood and wall
They nod and totter to their fall;
Their only business to contrive
The ways and means to keep alive,
And, if permitted by the Fates,
Encumber long their sons' estates;
Which, in compassion to the Jews,
The Fates aforesaid oft refuse.

But when from violated May
Winter's rude form is chased away,

When skies more blue and bright appear,
And sunshine marks the ripened year,
Charles in his Tilbury would roll
About, or, in the evening, stroll
Where all the town, arrayed *en masse*,
Disputes each inch of withered grass,
As if some spell their steps had bound
Fast to that single spot of ground:
Where countless wheels together dash,
Swift whirling—and, amidst the crash,
Horse jammed with foot, in gay confusion,
Just manage to escape contusion,
Wedging their shoulders into carriages,
To make reports of balls and marriages;
Of passports just obtained, or missed
For Almack's on each *Lady's list;*
What names of all the young and fair,
High-born and rich, are blazoned there;
Who are returned as sick, and who dead,
Among the luckless girls excluded.

For oft I've marked how *one* rejection
Has spoiled a blooming nymph's complexion.
A *second* has been known to leave her
In strong convulsions or a fever.
I wave the stories I have heard
Of what has happened from a *third.*
Nor marvel that a prize which, won,
Is capital, and yields to none
In this world's lottery—when lost,
Not health alone, but life should cost.
All on that magic LIST depends;
Fame, fortune, fashion, lovers, friends:
'Tis that which gratifies or vexes
All ranks, all ages, and both sexes.
If once to Almack's you belong,
Like monarchs, you can do no wrong;
But banished thence on Wednesday night,
By Jove, you can do nothing right.

There, baffled Cupid points his darts
With surer aim, at jaded hearts;
And Hymen, lurking in the porch,
But half conceals his lighted torch.
Hence the petitions and addresses
So humble to the Patronesses;
The messages and notes, by dozens,
From their Welch aunts and twentieth cousins,
Who hope to get their daughters in
By proving they are *founder's kin.*
Hence the smart miniatures enclosed (4)
Of unknown candidates proposed;
Hence is the fair divan at Willis's
Beset with Corydons and Phillises,
Trying, with perseverance steady,
First one, and then another Lady,
Who oft, 'tis rumoured, don't agree,
But clash like law and equity;
Some for the Rules in all their vigour,
Others to mitigate their rigour.

How shall the Muse, with colours faint
And pencil blunt, aspire to paint
Such high-raised hopes, such chilling fears,
Entreaties, threatenings, smiles, and tears!
The vainest Beauty will renounce
Her last imported blonde or flounce;
The gamester leave a raw beginner;
The diner-out forego his dinner;
The stern reformer change his notions,
And wave his notices of motions;
The bold become an abject croucher,
And the grave—giggle for a *Voucher;*
Too happy those who fail to nick it,
In stumbling on a *single ticket.*
See, all bow down—maids, widows, wives.—
As sentenced culprits beg their lives,
As lovers court their fair ones' graces,
As politicians sue for places;
So these, by sanguine hopes amused,
Solicit,—and are so refused.

In yonder group another chatters
Perhaps of less important matters:
If there's to-day as great a show
Of beauty as a week ago?
Whose curricle is that? and whether
Those iron-greys step out together?—
If W****s fancies he a fox is
In charging thus for opera-boxes,
Little suspecting (thoughtless calf)
How oft the whole is less than half;
(Which Van will learn when he relaxes
Some dozen of his darling taxes:)
If, in compassion to a building [5]
Degraded by such paint and gilding,
By frescos such as, on the walls
Of his dark cell, the maniac scrawls,
He means next year to set about
Matching its inside with its out;
To rival, though the attempt be rash,
The *Colonnades* of Mr. N**h;

And all the management and skill
Displayed in coaxing them down hill;
To mend a thousand shabbinesses
In decorations, scenes, and dresses;
Unseemly savings, sorry sights,
Cracked chandeliers, and mutton-lights
In corridors, where poisonous gasses
Ooze from their tubes, unscreened by glasses,
Such as who near a market stops
Sees flaring in the butchers' shops.
If his law funds begin to fail, or
If *one* day, "Waters versus Taylor"—
Another, "Taylor versus Waters,"
Must still amuse our wives and daughters:
Whether, renouncing litigation
For capering and modulation;
Close courts for crowded opera-doors,
Motions for steps, and briefs for scores;
He'll, for our money, yield us fruits
More to our taste than Chancery-suits;

Make us no more, the season through, sick
By harping on the self-same music,
Nor suffer thus to melt away
Half his enfeebled orchestra;
But ransack Italy, to bribe
His fair seceders to subscribe,
And teach, by fresh recruits from France,
The *old* idea how to dance.

Now come a host of eager questions,
Assertions, guesses, doubts, suggestions,
Touching no more on any theme
Than just enough to skim the cream.
If the French play goes on, that trade
So lucrative to Mr. Slade,
So thriving as to put old Drury
And Covent Garden in a fury.
If by authority are told
Stories at least a fortnight old

Of the undoers and undone
By sums at Brooks's lost or won;
Where Play, unfathomably deep,
From night till morning murders sleep;
Where many a party-coloured hoard
Lies heaped along the battered board;
Where the green rouleau and black *pony*
In counters, do the work of money;
And acres take their leave, and fly
Away on wings of ivory.

Next you have news by sea and land, all
Seasoned, if possible, with scandal;
Broad hint and inference censorious
Making things doubtful quite notorious;
Fair characters, by tales just hatched
And vouched for, in a trice despatched;
Here bare-faced lies, there playful sallies,
These aimed in sport, and those in malice,

At *absent* folks, amidst a throng
Of Gossips always in the wrong:
But since 'tis clear no earthly face is
At the same moment in two places,
But, while in one, by Fate's behest,
Must be away from all the rest;
Since, thus, on every side are hurled
Detraction's darts throughout the world;
Well may her feeblest victims be
Armed with enough philosophy,
Calmly the common ill to bear,
Which thus with all Mankind they share.

Then follow observations critical,
Or jokes, on men and things political;
Much of the Regent and his *Fêtes;*
Much of divisions and debates;
Of motions, speeches, names misquoted
In the last list of those who voted.

Thence to Newmarket and the races
Shifting, they tell of lengthened faces,
When for their debts Black Monday calls
Folks to account at Tattersall's;
Of all the baffled hedger feels
When *legs* are taking to their *heels*;
How suddenly aghast he looks,
When his, the paragon of *books*,
That *Book* whose value far outshone
Lord Spencer's famed Decameron,
Becomes, hey, presto! quick as thought,
Not worth the fraction of a groat!

Such is the tattle of our Beaus.
These simple elements compose
Where'er you drive, or ride, or walk,
The *Macedoine* of London-talk.
What if the mixture strange appear
To Squires? should *they* affect to sneer,

Or gravely vote, in spite to us,
What thus we deal in—frivolous;
Let them in earnest, or in fun, try
If they can match it in the country;
If of *their* fabric any particle
Is equal to our town-made article;
If *their* choice topics are as charming,
Their *justice-ing*, or hounds, or farming;
At which, when, jaded by the labour
Of listening, tenant nods, and neighbour,
The very chaplain shakes his head,
And steals, unbeneficed, to bed.

How much at home was Charles in all
The talk aforesaid—nicknamed small!
Seldom embarrassed, never slow,
His maxim always, "touch and go,"
From grave to gay he ran with ease,
Secure alike in both to please.

Chanced he to falter? A grimace
Was ready in the proper place;
Or a chased snuff-box, with its gems
And gold, to mask his has and hems,
Was offered round, and duly rapped,
Till a fresh topic could be tapped.
What if his envious rivals swore
'Twas jargon all, and he a bore?
The surly sentence was outvoted,
His jokes retailed, his jargon quoted;
And while he sneered or quizzed or flirted,
The world, half angry, was diverted.

Now is the clatter of his mill,
With all its rush of waters, still;
His chimes are motionless become,
His ear-subduing larum dumb.
Yes, Julia, *your* resistless battery
Has silenced jokes, and sneers, and flattery:

Now seldom seen, more seldom heard,
He shrugs—but utters scarce a word,
And bears about, like muzzled hound,
"A tongue chained up, without a sound!"

Once would he loiter, ere 'twas dark,
With Nymphs and Satyrs in the Park:
The Park! that magnet of the town,
That idol to which all bow down!
See how the universal throng,
Borne in one swelling tide along,
Crowds to its turf-clad altars, there
To beg the blessing of fresh air!
Throughout the week, but most on one day
Enjoyed beyond all others—Sunday,
With many a mutual punch and shove,
To Hyde-Park-Corner on they move,
Like bees, that, when the weather's warm,
Grow weary of their hives and swarm:

All active on that day of rest;
Pressing on every side, and pressed
In "Phœbus eye" from east to west,*
With a fair chance, while thus they busy 'em,
To "sleep," that evening, "in Elysium."

Perchance, a truant from his desk,
Some lover of the picturesque,
Whose soul is far above his shop,
Hints to his charmer where to stop;
And the proud landscape, from the hill, eye
Which crowns thy terrace—Piccadilly!
Whispering, "My dear, while others hurry,
"Let us look over into Surry."
There, as the summer-sun declines,
Yet still in full-orbed beauty shines,

* ———from the rise to set,
Sweats in the eye of Phœbus, and all night
Sleeps in Elysium. SHAKSP.

As, all on fire beneath his beams,
The fret-work of the Abbey gleams;
While on its towers a golden flood
Is poured above the tufted wood;
His charmer (kindred spirits, see
The blest effects of sympathy)
Is busied in a tasteful trial
To spell the hour upon the dial!

Mark how the mighty snow-ball gathers!
Lads, lasses, mothers, children, fathers,
All equal here, as if the pavement
To level them were like the grave meant,
As if one will informed the whole,
And urged them to a common goal.
See, in the living mass confounded,
All shapes, all sizes, slim, and rounded;
Every variety of features
That e'er distinguished human creatures.

Nor less their *habits* disagree:
Some have, at sunset, risen from tea;
Some linger on, till Dusk at *nine*
Bids them retire to dress and dine.
The same pursuits together jumble
The rich and poor, the proud and humble.
The' enfranchised tradesman, when he stirs,
Here, jostles half his customers.
Here, in a rage, the Bond-street spark
Is bearded by his father's clerk;
While yon proud dame (O sad event) is
Out-elbowed by her own apprentice!

What goads them on?——The influence
Of Nature and of Common Sense.
Thus they shake off the weekly yoke
Of business and its weekly smoke;
With verdure thus refresh their eyes,
And purchase health by exercise;

Giving their gasping lungs fair play,
And their cramped limbs a holiday:
And since, like others less polite,
Fine folks have lungs, and limbs, and sight,
All destined to the same employment,
All eager for the same enjoyment;
Here Sense and Nature have it hollow,
And Fashion is constrained to follow;
To join the vulgar happy crew,
And fairly do as others do.

Of this thy progeny be proud,
O England! though a motley crowd,
Can Europe or the world produce,
Alike for ornament and use,
Such models of stout active trim men,
Or samples of such lovely women?
Such specimens of order, dress,
Health, comfort, in-bred cleanliness,

As here displayed, the summer-sun
Lingering seems proud to shine upon?

But, O! the treachery of our weather,
When Sunday-folks are met together!
Its tempting brightness scarce matured,
How suddenly the day's obscured!
Bless me, how dark!—Thou threatening cloud,
Pity the *un-umbrella'd* crowd.
The cloud rolls onward with the breeze—
First, pattering on the distant trees
The rain-drops fall—then quicker, denser,
On many a Parasol and Spencer;
Soon drenching, with no mercy on it,
The straw and silk of many a bonnet.
Think of their hapless owners fretting,
While feathers, crape, and gauze are wetting!
The fruits of all their weekly toil
Given to the elements for spoil!

Think of the pang to well-dressed girls,
When, pinched in vain, their hair uncurls,
And ringlets from each lovely pate
Hang mathematically straight!
As off, on every side, they scour,
Still beats the persecuting shower,
Till, on the thirsty gravel smoking,
It fairly earns the name of *soaking*.
Fiercer and fiercer blows the gust,
Burthened at once with rain and dust:
Breathless they scud; some helter-skelter
To carriages, and some for shelter;
Lisping to coachmen drunk or dumb
In *numbers*—while no numbers come.
Nor sheds are near, nor open shops
Protect them from the "big round drops;"
Their sarsenets spoiled, their stockings splashed,
Their muslins prematurely washed;
Some in their clinging clothes so lank,
Others so bouncing, all so blank,

Enraged, resigned, in tears or frowning,
Look as if just escaped from drowning;
While anxious thoughts pursue them home,
Whence their next Sunday-dress must come.

Poor Charles! No creature sees him, late,
'Twixt Stanhope-street and Apsley-gate.
In his loved walks he wanders not;
Nor lounges in that darling spot
(Ogling himself into the graces
Of young adventurers with new faces),
Where crowds, by tyrant-custom yoked,
Meet, through the summer, to be choked,
Thinking dust pleasanter, no doubt,
With fashion—than fresh air, without;
And, keeping, by a rural plan,
As near the chimneys as they can,
Are shocked at vulgar folks, who run
To thy fair gardens, Kensington,

* Hyde-Park Corner.

To tread on verdure, and inhale
The freshness of the western gale;
Who hasten to the calm retreats
Of those alcoved and formal seats,
Where vows ill-spelt, in uncouth rhymes,
Betray the loves of former times,
With dates exact of Beauties reckoned
So killing—under George the Second;
Where Cockneys, duly taught that fame,
Howe'er achieved, is but a *name*,
Have proved they had it in their blood,
By tampering with the' unconscious wood,
To be immortal—if they could.

Heedless, though hundreds by them flit,
Mark, where in groups prim parties sit
On the same bench, ('tis doubtful whether
Huddled by chance or choice together;)
Nor sign of pleasure seen, nor word
Of cheerful sound among them heard;

As if all virtue lay in gravity,
And smiles were symptoms of depravity!
'Twere hard, methinks, their fate to brook,
Were they not happier than they look;
While opening Spring with all its flowers,
In vain leads on the *laughing* Hours;
On their dull looks and blunted sense
Wasting its choicest influence;
While as, at length aroused, they travel
Like snails along the glittering gravel,
Bursts the full chestnut on their sight,
In spiral blossoms, silver bright;
Lilacs their purple cones unfold,
And rich laburnums gleam in gold.

Julia, I own, you may command some
Attention—you are young and handsome;
Are fond, of course—perhaps, are true—
As yet, that secret rests with you.

Still be advised, and, lest you lose it,
Enjoy your influence——don't abuse it.
Why thus encroaching? wherefore want
To fetter your enslaved gallant;
As an Egyptian queen, we're told,
Served a great conqueror of old,
Who from his height of fame she hurled,
And wheedled—to resign a world?
For thee, thus weaned from all his habits,
(You women make us tame as rabbits):
Charles now no longer bathes nor swims,
To cool his blood and brace his limbs.
No more with pliant arm he stems
The tide or current of the Thames,
Though, till his talent you derided,
How deep he dived, how glibly glided!

I doubt if he has *pluck* remaining
To venture on a six weeks training,

That first of pugilistic blisses,
Since he has found your smiles and kisses
(So strange his taste) a greater treat
Than rubbing, racing, or raw meat.
And yet, one fonder of *the Fancy*
Than Charles, of old, did ever man see?
Skilled in defence, in onset skilled,
All wondered as he fibbed and milled,
Laying his adversary low
In no time, by a favourite blow.
But hold.—Such prowess to describe
Asks all the jargon of the tribe;
And though enough to serve my turn
From "*Boxiana*" I might learn,
Or borrow from an ampler store
In the bright page of Thomas Moore,
Too rich in both to grudge a bit
Either of poetry or wit,
Yet ladies of a gentle taste
Would find such learning, here, misplaced.

Past are those glories! Now, it ruffles
His temper but to hear of muffles:
Him at the Fives-Court, or at Moulsey,
Never henceforward will a soul see.
Now, he's an humble tame adorer,
Sneers at a *facer* or a *floorer*,
Of all he learned so well of Crib,
Remembering only how to *fib*.

Say is the man to blame, or you [6].
That thus he's never black and blue?
Who can persist to be a boxer
When she he dotes on vows it shocks her;
Or who, by Beauty favoured, chooses
But in her cause, to hazard bruises?
He plays no Tennis, though a strong one;
He draws no bow,—except a long one—
That noble art which *you* have taught him, [7]
And to such rare perfection brought him,

That in its practice he excels
All rivals, whether Beaus or Belles.

The Serpentine, that Prince of Rivers,
(But name it, how the recreant shivers!)
Tempts him no more to roam at large in
The groups that hasten to its margin
In winter, when the slanting sun
Just skirts the' horizon, and is gone;
When from his disk a short-lived glare
Is wasted on the clear cold air;
When the snow sparkles, on the sight
Flashing intolerable white;
And, swept by hurried feet, the ground
Returns a crisp and crushing sound.

There, once, well strapped from point to heel,
Glided his foot on glittering steel,
Like a light vessel on her keel;

And, rapid as the viewless wind,
Left all its rivals far behind.
Never were yet achieved by skaits
Such out-side edges, *threes* and *eights!*
While, in his attitudes and figure,
Such ease was blended with such vigour,
That hundreds, envious of his fame,
Aspired to execute the same:
But, in the trial, for their pains,
Too happy to escape with sprains,
Tumbled, to edify the Town,
On every side, like ninepins, down.

Still would he wheel and circle, scorning
The "mighty crack's" prophetic warning,
Which, ere the brittle fetters break
That bind a river, pond, or lake,
Sounds a retreat, while yet in time.
For lo! as, in a Pantomime,

Obedient to the waving wand,
Or word of magical command,
Trap-doors, for ghosts to disappear,
Are opened, as its end draws near;
Thus, when the Necromancer, Thaw
Gives to his subject-streams the law,
Woe to the loiterers! In a trice
Splits, far and wide, the treacherous ice,
Plunging (if only to the chin
How lucky!) many a victim in.

There, while the fur-clad nymphs admired him,
And with their frozen beauties fired him,
Not less he prized their eyes' soft blue,
Because their lips were azure too;
And from their cheeks the truant roses
Strayed, frost-directed, to their noses;
Though women's tempers oft are ruffled
By skins so chapped, and hues so shuffled.

For soon, he knew, those wandering graces
Would settle in their proper places;
That the blood mantles, and the eyes
Brighten, by air and exercise;
That every charm which Frost withdraws
Returns, with interest, when it thaws.

Besides, when *features* grow less pleasing,
Thus cooled below the point of freezing,
Then on fair *shapes*, though closely wadded,
Love takes his stand, and proves his Godhead,
Sending, through folds on folds, his dart
Unblunted to the destined heart:
So magnets, moved beneath, enable
Needles to caper on a table;
So, through conductors, in the dark
You see conveyed the' electric spark.
What if Love's fires, in frost and snow,
But metaphorically glow

With unsubstantial heat?—You know it's
Quite fierce enough to warm the poets.

More of my River.—Don't refuse
Your aid a little longer, Muse.
Since you have been so kind a hinter
Of what adorns it in the winter,
Don't, on a sudden, now grow dumber,
But, pr'ythee, help me through the summer.
Well may the coyest of the Nine
Be proud to sing the Serpentine;
For never breeze has swept, nor beam
Shed light upon a luckier stream.
A brook that, from a scanty source
Hard by, just struggles in its course,
Scarce has it reached, slow trickling thence,
The bounds of royal influence,
When (mark the favour and protection
That flows from interest and connexion!)

'Tis bidden a nobler form to take;
To spread and widen to a lake;
And with a strange meandering name,
Like Cromwell—to be *dammed* to fame. *

A strain, fair Lake, of loftier mood
Than mine, should celebrate thy flood;
A tongue more eloquent should tell
The beauties that around thee dwell.
Here frown, 'tis true, no hills gigantic,
Of towering height and shapes romantic;
Here are no torrents, caves, nor rocks,
Nor sweeping blasts, nor thunder-shocks;
And, though their absence is a pity,
I must confess it,—no banditti:
No echoes wake, within thy bounds,
From deep-toned horn, or deep-mouthed hounds,

* Like Cromwell, damned to everlasting fame.

POPE.

As, hotly chased from crag to crag,
Bursts in full speed the panting stag;
Nor, when unruffled by a storm,
Does thy clear wave reflect the form
Of some rude castle, seat sublime
Of war, and violence, and crime;
Nor can I summon to my verse
A single sounding rhyme in Erse;
Nor paint, alas! as Scott has done,
The glories of the setting sun,
When monks are chanting choral hymns on
A lake on fire with gold and crimson;
While their boat slumbers in the shade
By some unwieldy mountain made,
As o'er it comes the fragrant breath
Of Evening from the purple heath.
And though *our* Lake, when sultry day dies,
Can boast—not one, but many Ladies,
Nay, to increase the wonder more,
Bucks on two legs, as well as four,

No maiden here,——but hold, I falter,
Nor dare pursue the steps of Walter,
When deep he dips the crystal surge in
The lovely form of some coy virgin,
And her bathed beauties, by and by, lands—
In short—Hyde-Park is not the Highlands.

But, though ungraced with one of these,
Still we have lawns, and paths, and trees.
Why should our landscape blush for shame?
'Tis fresh and gay, if flat and tame.
None view it awe-struck or surprised;
But still, 'tis smart and civilized.
Here are the Royal Gardens seen,
Waving their woods of tufted green
Above the Powder-Magazine:
Beyond it, the sub-ranger's villa,
Where, once, lay anchored the flotilla
To fill us all with warlike rage meant,
In peace-time, by a mock engagement.

Next come, to furnish due variety,
The sheds of the Humane Society,
In case of thaws, or inebriety;
And, winding among these, a drive
With gigs and curricles alive.
Thence (amidst planes and weeping willows)
Swept by the zephyr, tiny billows
Come rippling to the smooth cascade,
So lately founded by the aid
Of pick-axe, trowel, rule, and spade;
Near which (his mother left the lurch in)
Perchance some lounging truant urchin
For halfpence with his play-mate wrangles,
Or with a pin for minnows angles;
Or coaxes from her callow brood
The dingy matron-swan, for food,
And eyes her ruffled plumes, and springs
Aside, in terror of her wings.

These charms, and more than these, are thine,
Straight though thou art, O *Serpentine!*

And, when the quivering sun-beams dance
And sparkle on thy smooth expanse;
When to thy stream the deer confides
His branching horns and dappled sides;
And cattle on thy shelving brink
Snuff the sweet air, or stoop to drink
Where trees, through all their generations,
From withered stumps to new plantations,
Meet, as a merry-making gathers
Young children round their old grand-fathers;
Backed by the "glittering skirts" of London,(8)
Its buildings now in shade, now sunn'd on,—
'Twould surely any tourist gravel,
(Or home or foreign be his travel,)
In rummaging his sketch-book through,
To find a more enlivening view
Than here, by Art and Nature moulded,
Is to his careless eye unfolded.
Yet, to go further and fare worse,
Folks waste their time, and drain their purse!

There, where, in spring, the grass between
Each dusty stripe looks fresh and green,
Methinks I see the russet track
Worn by the hoofs of Charles's hack,
Practised to tread, with gentle pace,
The paths of that enchanting place.
While he that gentle pace would check,
Throw the loose reins on *Sancho*'s neck,
And from the saddle, at his ease,
Enjoy the landscape and the breeze;
As moved the nymphs, in mingled ranks,
On to the River's gravelly banks,
Glancing between the rugged boles
Of ancient elms their parasols,
Whose hues—but similes must fail.—
A rainbow, or a peacock's tail,
Or painter's pallet, to the eye
Scarce offers such variety
As the protecting silk which shades
At once, and decks these lovely maids,

While, smartly *Spencered*, ev'n the ugly
Beneath its Cupolas look smugly.

Meantime, escaped their eastern dens,
A crowd of sober citizens,
Thus tempted, seem to have forgot
Their Sunday's lesson,—" Covet not,"
And in the mirror of these waters
Admire each other's wives and daughters,
Who linger where the River shelves,
Not backward to admire themselves.

Say, Julia, had you no compunction
In issuing such a hard injunction?
Say for what cause, avowed or hidden,
A lounge so harmless is forbidden?
Poor Charles, the laughing world to blind,
Hints that a man may change his mind;
Thither he spurs his hack no more,
But votes the whole concern a bore;

Has weaned his feet from ice and skaits,
And left to Cocker *threes* and *eights*.
The breeze may blow, the sun may shine,
He's never at the Serpentine:
In vain the girls and deer so fallow
Sport on its banks,—he swears 'tis yellow, (9)
And wonders how he e'er could dream
Of beauty in so foul a stream!

Dark are the mists exhaled from passion.
How have they dimmed this glass of fashion!
Julia, to *you* the loss we owe
Of all that's perfect in a Beau.
You've marred the model, bent the rule,
Disgraced and broken up the school
Where unfledged coxcombs, newly caught,
Were, by his bright example, taught
More in one season, than their peers
Now master in a dozen years.

But how shall I, unblamed, express
The awful mysteries of DRESS;
How, all unpractised, dare to tell
The art sublime, ineffable,
Of making *middling* men look well;
Men who had been such heavy sailers
But for their shoe-makers and tailors?
So, sharpened by the cutler's skill,
The dullest weapons wound and kill:
So, when 'tis scarcely fit to eat,
Good cooks, by *dressing*, flavour meat.
And as, when steam has lent it motion
'Gainst wind and tide, across the ocean,
The merest tub will far outstrip
The progress of the lightest ship
That ever on the waters glided,
If with an engine unprovided;—
Thus Beaus, in person and in mind
Excelled by those they leave behind,

On, through the world, undaunted, press,
Backed by the mighty power of Dress;
While folks less confident than they
Stare, in mute wonder,—and give way.

Charles was a master, a professor
Of this great art—a first-rate dresser.
Oft have I traced him through the Town,
Mowing whole ranks of beauty down,
Armed at all points, from head to foot,
From rim of hat to tip of boot;
Above so loose, below so braced,
In chest exuberant, and in waist
Just like an hour-glass or a wasp,
So tightened, he could scarcely gasp.
Cold was the nymph who did not dote
Upon him, in his new-built coat;
Whose heart could parry the attacks
Of his voluminous *Cossacks*—

Trowsers so called from those barbarians
Nursed in the *Steppes*—the Crim-Tartarians,
Who, when they scour a country, under
Those ample folds conceal their plunder.
How strange their destiny has been!
Promoted, since the year fifteen,
In honour of these fierce allies,
To grace our British legs and thighs!
Fashion's a tide which nothing stems;
So the *Don* mingles with the *Thames!*[10]

But, ere his darts were aimed to kill,
One charm, he knew, was wanting still.
"Weak," would he cry, "are the attacks
"Of your voluminous *Cossacks;*
"In vain to suffocation braced
"And bandaged is your wasp-like waist;
"In vain your buckram-wadded shoulders
"And chest astonish all beholders;

"Wear any coat you will, 'tis fruitless;
"Those shoes, those very boots are bootless,
"Whose tops ('twas I advised the mixture)
"Are moveable, and spurs a fixture;
"All is unprofitable, flat,
"And stale, without a smart CRAVAT,
"Muslined enough to hold its starch—
"That last key-stone of Fashion's arch!"

"Have you, my friend," I've heard him say,
"Been lucky in your *turns* to-day?—[11]
"Think not that what I ask alludes
"To Fortune's stale vicissitudes,
"To her capricious ups and downs,
"Her treacherous smiles, or withering frowns:
"Nor have I now, alas! to learn
"How cards, and dice, and women turn,
"And what prodigious contributions
"They levy, in their revolutions:

" Nor heed I, if, in times so critical,
" You've managed well your turns political.
" The *turns* of your *Cravat* I mean,
" Tell me if *these* have lucky been?
" Have your attempts at once succeeded?
" Or (while an hour has passed unheeded
" And unregretted) have you toiled
" Till a week's laundry has been spoiled,
" Ere round your neck, in every fold
" Exact, the muslin has been rolled,
" And, dexterously in front confined,
" Has kept the proper set behind;
" Not letting loose, nor pinning in
" One jot too much of cheek or chin:
" In short, by dint of hand and eye,
" Have you achieved a perfect tie?—
" These are *my* turns,—'twere idle pother
" To waste a thought on any other.

" Should yours (kind heaven, avert the omen!)
" Like the cravats of vulgar, low men,

" Asunder start—and, yawning wide,
" Disclose a chasm on either side,
" Letting, behind its checkered screen,
" The secrets of your throat be seen;
" Or should it stubbornly persist,
" To take some awkward tasteless twist,
" Some crease indelible, and look
" Just like a dunce's dog's-eared book,
" How would you parry the disgrace?
" In what assembly show your face?
" How brook your rival's scornful glance,
" Or partner's titter in the dance?
" How in the morning dare to meet
" The quizzers of the park or street?
" Your occupation's gone,—in vain
" Hope to dine out, or flirt again.
" The LADIES from their lists will put you,
" And even *I*, my friend, must cut you!"

Such once was Charles.—No doctrine sounder
Than his, no principles profounder;

And well he practised what he knew,
Himself the great sublime he drew!
Ere yet, in deep dismay, the town
Mourned o'er his abdicated crown,
Such *was* our hero.—Now where is he?
Fall'n headlong from a height so dizzy,
(Regardless of the shame and risk,)
Charm'd by *your* eyes, you basilisk!
These, Julia, are the tender mercies
Of you enchantresses, you Circes!
See him, almost a sloven grown,
Muse on your shape, neglect his own.
His absent thoughts, like needle true,
Not on the muslin fixed, but you,
On cheeks that glow, on lips that pout
He gazes, till his hand is out.
Then, all his *turns* are put to flight,
Then fade the tapers on his sight;
Visions of Love and Beauty rise,
And wean him from his dearest *ties*.

No more his well-brushed hair is sleek
With *eau de miel,* or *huile antique.*(12)
The golden key no more unlocks,
By *Bramah*'s aid, his rose-wood box;
And with the treasures there displayed,
Dazzles the wondering chamber-maid;
As, on her broom reclined, she pauses,
Ogling the silver cups and vases,
Whence steams a mingled soft perfume,
New to her nostrils, through the room.

No more with buckram or with wool
His overloaded bosom's full;
One glance from *you* is quite enough
To "cleanse it of that perilous stuff."
Loosed by the spell of your endearments,
His tortured ribs have "burst their cerements,"
And, like delinquents freed from jail,
His waist is fairly out on bail.

Julia, you've moved its *habeas-corpus;*
But when the man is grown a porpus,
Long, long before the season 's ended,
You'll wish it had been still *suspended.*

Converted thus, with all the zeal
Which converts or affect or feel,
For errors past he makes amends,
By quizzing all his former friends;
Forgets how long he was their tutor,
And grows at once their persecutor;
Derides the stiff cravats and collars
And braces of his favourite scholars,
Laughs at his own apostate jokes,
And dresses—just like other folks.

If * * * * sends a card to dine,
The fool 's engaged, or drinks no wine;
Though, all last season, what a swiller he
Was of Champaigne, *mousseux* and *sillery,*

At every mouthful, all the way
From soup to *fondu* and *souffle!*
Digressing, in the heat of action,
To Burgundy, from mere distraction,
And thence to perfumed hock, and from it
Scenting the vintage of the comet.
Scarce pausing, when he had so far eat,
How knowingly he'd sip his claret!
With gentle undulation handle
The glass, upheld 'twixt nose and candle,
That glass so thin in bowl and stem,
Which just suspends the liquid gem;
Then, with a wager or an oath,
Pronounce upon its age and growth.

How changed! For him the iced Champaigne
Steams from its silver vase in vain;
Round after round, decanters pass
Unheeded by his empty glass.

He's quite ashamed to be punctilious,
But never was a man so bilious;
Talks of the fruits of living gaily,
Of Calomel, and Doctor Baillie;
Has lost his taste, can scarcely tell
A *Salmi* from a *Bechamelle*;
Swears there's no banqueting like love,
No turtle like the turtle-dove;
And, ere the wine comes round again,
Shies, bolts—slips and away by *ten*.

I hear (perhaps the story false is)
From Almack's, that he never waltzes;
With Lady Anne, or Lady Biddy
Twirling, till he's in love or giddy;
The girl a pigmy, he a giant,
His cravat stiff, her corset pliant.
There, while some jaded couple stops,
The rest go round like humming tops,

Each in the circle, with its neighbour
Sharing alternate rest and labour:
While many a gentle *chaperon*
(As the fair Dervises spin on)
Sighs, with regret, that *she* was courted
Ere this new fashion was imported;
Ere the dull minuet-step had vanished,
With jigs and country-capers banished.

But Charles, whose energy relaxes,
No more revolves upon his axis,
As sounds of cymbal and of drum,
Deep clanging, from the' orchestra come,
And round him moves, in radiance bright,
Some beauteous beaming satellite;
Nor ventures, as the night advances,
On a new partner in French dances;
Nor, his high destiny fulfilling
Through all the mazes of quadrilling,

Holds, lest the figure should be hard,
Close to his nose a printed card,
Which, for their special use invented,
To Beaus, on entrance, is presented;
A strange device, but all allow
'Tis useful—as it tells them how
To foot it in the proper places,
Much better than their partners' faces.

O! Julia, could you now but creep
Incog into the room and peep,
Well might you triumph in the view
Of all he has resign'd for you!
Mark, how the married and the single
In yon gay groups delighted mingle!
Midst diamonds blazing, tapers beaming,
Midst Georges, stars, and crosses gleaming,
We gaze on beauty, catch the sound
Of music, and of mirth around;

And Discord feels her empire ended
At Almack's,—or at least suspended.

Here is the only coalition
'Twixt Government and Opposition;
Here parties, dropping hostile notions,
Make, on their legs, the self-same motions.
Beauty each angry passion quenches,
And seats them on the self-same benches,
There to uphold, without a schism,
The Patronesses' despotism;
The Whig, for female power and glory
As great a stickler as the Tory: [13]
For, mortals, happy you may be
At Almack's, but you can't be free;
Bent both in body and in soul
To gentle, absolute control.
Yet though despotic, why should any call
Its wholesome exercise tyrannical?

Unlike all tyrants since the flood,
These only mean their subjects' good.

What form is that, with looks so sinister?—
Willis, their Excellencies' minister.—
See where in portly pride he stands
To execute their high commands;
Unmoved his heart, unbribed his hands!
See, where the barrier he prepares
Just at the bottom of the stairs,
Midst fragrant flowers and shrubs exotic;—
A man relentless and despotic
As he of Tunis or Algiers,
Or any of their Grand Visiers.

Suppose the prize by hundreds missed
Is yours at last.—You're on the list.—
Your voucher's issued, duly signed;
But hold—your ticket's left behind.

What's to be done? there's no admission.
In vain you flatter, scold, petition;
Feel your blood mounting like a rocket,
Fumble in vain in every pocket.
"The rule's so strict, I dare not stretch it,"
Cries Willis, "pray, my lord, go fetch it."—
"Nonsense!" you cry, "so late at night—
"Surely you know me, sir, by sight."
"Excuse me; the committee sat
"This morning."—"Did they, what of that?"—
"An order given this very day,
"My lord, I dare not disobey."
"Your pardon."——Further parley's vain;
So for your ticket, in the rain,
Breathless, you canter home again.
Thus cured (and can th' expense be less?)
Are absence, and forgetfulness.

And say, do they abuse their powers
'Gainst *ultra-fashionable* hours?—

Here once you walked your midnight round
In vain,—no creature could be found,
Save a few stragglers, in the vapours
From gazing at the walls and tapers.
Then not a dance could be begun,
Waltz, or quadrille, till after *One*;
While, without music, friends, or books
Perchance, at home on tenter-hooks,
The least contended with the greatest
Who should come lounging in the latest.
But is not now the law, in letter
And spirit, altered for the better,
Since our fair Sovereigns' last *Ukase*
Has peopled the deserted place,
And forced the crowd, ere midnight strike,
To do the very thing they like?
All, with their other pleasures, gaining
Perhaps the greatest—of complaining.

What sounds were those?—O earth and heaven!
Heard you the chimes—*half past eleven?*

They tell, with iron tongue, your fate,
Unhappy lingerer, if you're late.
Haste, while you may.—Behold! approaches[14]
The last of yonder string of coaches;
Stern Willis, in a moment more,
Closes the inexorable door,
And great the conjuror must be
Who can cry, "open, Sesamé!"

So, when a packet hurries over
From Calais, through the straits, to Dover,
Her sails all set, to save her tide
And supper on the other side;
Wishing the force of steam were lent her,
While luckier ships the harbour enter;
Just with her bowsprit on the town,
'Tis ebb,—the fatal flag 's hauled down!
She sees, and *sickening* at the sight,
Lies to, or beats about all night.

Such is the rule, which none infringes.
The door one jot upon its hinges
Moves not. Once past the fatal hour,
Willis has no dispensing power.
Spite of persuasion, tears, or force,
"The law," he cries, "must take its course."
And men may swear, and women pout.
No matter,—they are all shut out.

"Friend, I'm The Ministry,—give way!"
"Avaunt, Lord Viscount Castlereagh!
"You're doubtless in the Commons' house
"A mighty man, but here a mouse.
"This evening there was no debate
"Or business, and your lordship's late.
"We show no favour, give no quarter
"*Here*, to your ribbon, or your garter.
"*Here*, for a Congress no one cares,
"Save that alone which sits up stairs."

Fair Worcester pleads with Wellington;
Valour with Beauty. " Hence, begone!
" Perform elsewhere your destined parts;
" One conquer kingdoms, t'other hearts.
" My Lord, you'll have enough to do;
" Almack's is not like Waterloo.
" Awhile lay by that wreath of laurels
" Culled in composing Europe's quarrels;
" Secure, the war-whoop at her door,
" In Britain's cause to gather more."—
For the first time in vain, his Grace
Sits down in form before the place,
Finds, let him shake it to the centre,
One fortress that he cannot enter,
Though he should offer on its borders
The sacrifice of half his orders.
The English Duke—the Spanish Lord—
The Prince of Flanders—drops his sword;

Compelled at last, ere break of day,
To raise the siege, and march away!

Thus our fair Sovereigns "rule the *ball!*"
Thus equal are their laws for all!—
Yet, (since no word, nor thought, nor action
Of Greatness can escape detraction;
Since never yet has been invented
The art to make us all contented)
A few there are, whom fools or mad I call,
With notions of reform quite radical;
Eager to change the constitution
Of Almack's by a revolution;
Rebels, whose fancy is so stricken
With peas, asparagus, and chicken,
That, if they ever get the upper-
Hand, they'll insist upon a supper.
Nay some, apostles of sedition,
Have lately ventured to petition;

To rail at Congo and Bohea,
Because, forsooth, they are but *tea;*
Libels on London-cream to utter,
And quarrel with their bread and butter.
'How niggardly,' they cry, 'to stoop
'To paltry *black* and *green* from soup!
'The merest novice once could gain
'A hearing over iced Champaigne,
'And claret, ev'n of second growth,
'Gave spirit to an amorous oath.
'But now, what lifeless love is made
'On cakes, orgeat, and lemonade!
'The timid heart, the weary heel,
'Require a full substantial meal;
'Women, when hungry, are unkind,
'And men too faint to speak their mind.
'Tea mars all mirth, makes evenings drag,
'And talk grow flat, and courtship flag;
'Tea, mawkish beverage, is the reason
'Why all the flirtings of the season

'Grace with ten marriages, at most,
'The columns of the *Morning-Post.*

'Return, blest days—or rather nights (15)
'Of dear, ineffable delights,
'When all the *West,* at Fashion's call,
'Flocked to a Piccadilly-ball,
'And found their multitudes increased
'By strong detachments from the *East.*
'When hungry crowds, with dancing jaded,
'Down the great stair-case "promenaded,"
'(A term invented then for rushing,
'Squeezing and elbowing, and pushing)
'To feast below, 'midst blooming faces,
'On all the season's delicacies,
'And under tables stretch their legs
'Heaped with green peas, and plovers' eggs.
'There fragrant pines midst strawberries, grapes,
'And cherries, reared their graceful shapes,

'Sent up in cotton to regale
'Our palates, by the Yorkshire mail;
'And though (since fruits, when fire has done
'Its best, will languish for the sun)
'Tasteless and flat, yet folks were lost
'In wonder at the sums they cost!

'Then "wreathed smiles" went round, and speeches
'Fine, forced, and plentiful,—as peaches,
'And costly wines on every side
'Poured their bright current far and wide.
'Hark to the toast from many a guest.
'Grateful, elated, and refreshed.
"Here's to our generous hostess' health!
"How nobly she employs her wealth,
"Who, though five hundred are set down,
"Finds *chickens' wings* for all the Town!"(16)

'What feelings the remembrance rouses!
'Past is that golden age of *Houses*.

'No tongue can tell the difference, no pen.
'Now scarce a door of *one* is open.—
'Ne'er shall we see, I'll venture odds,
'Such nights and suppers of the Gods;
'Feasting's now folly, fasting clever,
'And London's glory gone for ever!'

Too warm, my friends, your anger waxes;
Consider, pray, the war and taxes.
First 'twas Napoleon and the French.
Now 'tis The Peace.—We *must* retrench.
War was a bitter scourge and curse;
Yet peace, is, somehow, ten times worse.
Peace, or (as more than one division
Has gravely voted it) *Transition*,
As commerce droops, and times grow harder,
Shuts here a cellar, there a larder;
By slow yet sure degrees, disables
Parks, gardens, eating-rooms, and stables;

Nor yet in her career relents,
But mows down whole establishments.
The poor, the middling, shoot a pitch
More and more humble;—ev'n the rich
From whose fat acres milk and honey
Keep flowing in the shape of money,
For lean economy produce
If not a reason, an excuse.
Their rates are high, their rents decrease,
Their corn's a drug;—'tis all the Peace!
This jade-like Peace! Say, who will father her,
Unless she's sworn to the tax-gatherer?

Then only think, you grumbling ninny,
Three such assemblies for a guinea!
Tell me, should supper banish tea,
Could *one* so smart be given for *three?*
With dinner too at *eight* served up,
Pray when do you propose to sup?

Man, to exist, must eat, I grant;
But, if you're not a cormorant,
How late must be the morning's light
That dawns upon your appetite!

For Charles, *he* never gave advice on
That knotty point, Champaigne or Hyson,
But, letting others urge their plea
For supper, was content with tea.
Hunger might do its worst—the smart
He felt was in a nobler part,
Not in his stomach, but his heart;
Temptation at each glance redoubling,
When cups went round and urns were bubbling
For nymphs whose beauty well might move
The coldest of our sex to love.

O! that I dared, since hearts of iron
Melt at the strains of Moore and Byron,

Borrow their thoughts and language now
To paint our Almack's Belles! for how
Unless *their* Muse my fancy warms,
Describe such features and such forms!
The hair in auburn waves, or flaxen,
Shading their necks and shoulders waxen,
The curls that on fair bosoms lie
In clusters of deep ebony!
How dare to dwell ('tis so immoral)
On downy cheeks, and lips of coral,
On eyes of sapphire or of jet
Beneath their brows o'er-arching set,
(Eyes which, no matter what their hue,
Are sure to beat you—black and blue)
Or shapes, as if by sculpture moulded,
In shining drapery enfolded!

To give their graceful motions scope,
Now, *tightly stretched*, the barrier rope

Hems in Quadrillers, nymph and spark,
Like bounding deer within a park;
Now *dropped*, transforms the floor again
For Waltzers, to an open plain.
Approach, O votary of Hymen;
Whether of forward, or of shy men,
Approach, and at the luck rejoice
Which yields such beauty to your choice.
This is the moment to advance,
To claim your partner in the dance,
And if your fancy paints her fairer
Than other nymphs, to win and wear her.

But, ere you try your fortune, lend
An ear to good advice, my friend,
And keep, if not an elder brother,
Your distance from her aunt and mother.
Of youthful hearts those ruthless breakers
Will weigh your passion with your acres.

So sailors on the top-mast stand,
Intent on one look-out—for *land.*
They deem no folly half so great
As love, without a large estate;
And think the nation ne'er will thrive
Where younger sons presume to wive.
In vain you plead, in vain importune,
Where, gentle shepherd, where's your fortune?
Do what you will, say what you can,
"*Manors,*" they tell you, "make the man."

Hence, flames and darts! ye amorous sighs, hence!
Breathe not without—a Special licence!
For what are favors, bride-cakes, honey-
Moons, without equipage and money?
Or what though Cupids round them hover?
Unless (the conjuration over
Which makes a husband of a lover)
Four conscious horses, strong and supple,
Whisk from the door the happy couple,

And lodge them in that deep retreat
Impregnable—a country seat;
There, haply in the sultry season,
Condemned, without one earthly reason,
To struggle through a week's warm weather
In hopeless solitude together.

Strange work of Fate, with Custom leaguing,
To make ev'n happiness fatiguing!
Think how this caging must perplex
Two persons, though of different sex;
Unless kind fortune sends a third
To put in, now and then, a word!
For lovers may, when raptures fail,
When tender *tête-à-têtes* grow stale,
And Time creeps on with pinions leaded,
Wax very weary—*though they're wedded.*

Thus many a pair, so lately free,
Take their first lesson in Ennui;

And justly may be dunces reckoned,
If not quite perfect in a second.
Surely 'twere kinder not to banish
These turtles,—not to bid them vanish
At once into some rustic den,
Far from the cheerful haunts of men,
Till they are reconciled, and broke
A little to the nuptial yoke.
Launched in a life so strange and new,
Society should help them through;
As training makes young colts less wild,
Or as a go-cart props a child,
Until by practice steady grown,
Its infant limbs can move alone.

Say, why should grots and shrubberies hide
A lawful bridegroom and a bride?
Why must they, lost in shady groves,
Fit shelter for unlicensed loves,

Steal from the' approving world, and seek
A long probationary week
Of close retirement, as profound
As if they both were under ground?
Twelve hours of every four-and-twenty
Left to themselves, methinks, were plenty.
Then why to villas hurry down,
When these, fond pair, are yours in Town?

Be counselled.—Stir not, near or far,
But stay, I charge you, where you are.
The dream of Passion soon or late
Is broken——don't anticipate.
Haste not to lose your hopes in fears,
Stark mad for moments, dull for years;
Devour not, for your comfort's sake,
At once, like children, *all* your cake;
Truth (on your memory well engrave it)
Whispers, you cannot eat and have it.

Gold is too precious,—lay it not
So thickly on a single spot;
But beat the bullion—husbands, wives—
And spread it over all your lives.

But whither does my zeal mislead me?
And why these warnings?—None will heed me.
My marriage-maxims too, though fine,
Are not, Miss Julia, in your line:
So to the theme I bid adieu,
And hasten back to Charles and you.

If thus from Almack's he withdraws,
What but your witchcraft is the cause?
What but your spells—if now no more
The hero hastens, as before,
The self-same crowds, next night, to meet
For novelty, in Argyll-street,
Whither they run from space and ease
At Almack's, to secure a squeeze,

Taught by long practice, to a tittle,
How *too much room* endears *too little*.
There, in the midst of Perlet's acting,
(Reckoned so easy and attracting)
Would he contrive that not a word
The Frenchman uttered should be heard;
Sending all innocent away
Of sense or meaning in the play:
A practice somewhat rude, 'tis true,
Ev'n for the fashion;—but he knew
How often there, with colour faded,
Dress rumpled and attention jaded,
A fair one will *affect* to listen,
And gaze with eyes that never glisten
Till Fancy paints what, after all,
Delights her most—the' approaching ball.

'Tis over,—and he never drives
To White's, or Brooks's for *French fives*,

Where nights, amidst the anxious sport,
Can't be too long, nor whist too short;
Nor kills an evening at the Play,
Lest you should think he goes astray;
Nor Opera, where he might be hit
By a chance-medley from the pit;
Nor dares with *partie fine* to sup—
In short, the man is quite done up.

Should he propose a trip to Paris,
The scheme, 'tis ten to one, miscarries.
What,—*you* consent to trust your lover
One inch beyond the Straits of Dover?
Trust him to run the giddy round
Of pleasure on enchanted ground,
To follow all his whims and fancies
In such a ticklish place as France is?
That region where the sun 's so bright,
The air so pure, the wine so light!

To canter, through a land like this,
Up to its gay Metropolis;
There walk the Boulevards, there enjoy all
The orgies of the Palais-royal,
That central mart of provocation,
Where every step 's a fresh temptation;
Where all who stray, without a clue, in
Have their full choice of roads to ruin,
As if some demon took his measure,
Each fitted with his favourite pleasure;
Each, could a new one be invented,
Indulged with *that*, if not contented.

How short the lesson of the school!
How easy is its only rule!
"Buy toys,—make love,—laugh, eat, and drink.
"Not often sleep, and never think.
"From joy to joy, unquestioned, ramble;
"But chiefly, O my pupils!—*gamble*.

"Winning, you'll seldom take your gains out;
"But losing—you may blow your brains out."

Grant he avoids that dangerous den,
Or enters it unhurt.—What then?
In every street the mischief lurks,
The dear delicious poison works.
Who shall a conflagration hinder
Midst sparks so thickly showered on tinder?
Where'er he wanders, nets are spread,
Traps baited, for his heart or head.
Let him but enter their *Spectacles*,
Some syren puts him into shackles:
He's hers,—'tis useless to rebel,
She dances, sings, or acts so well.
Then he has read in heathen books
That Goddesses have just such looks;
And, should he manage to escape her eye,
Falls a sure victim to the drapery.

Whose folds so openly display
Her beauties in the new *ballet*.

Perchance, where sparks regale their lasses
With Roman Punch, sorbets, and glaces,
Careless, unthoughtful, and alone, he's
Strolling through *Coblentz* to Tortoni's,(17)
"Stung with the thoughts" of ice—or lingering,
Caught by the wire or catgut-fingering
Of some young minstrel, whose romances
Are carolled, while her sister dances,
While the bright moon, or evening star
Beams on her Savoyard-guitar.
There gentle mingles with plebeian,
And drumming hares with pipes Pandean.
There, rays from rope-suspended lamps
(Undimmed, as through our island-damps)
Light up the chairs in triple rows
Where listless staring Belles repose;

Those chairs so cheap, that no one blushes
Because their bottoms are of rushes,
When rest for hours and such a view
Are purchased for a single *sou*;
When thus they blend, in sultry weather,
Ease and economy together.

But who can tell, unless they travel,
The value of our English gravel?
O! for one drop of water, just
To cool the air and lay the dust!
What, through the dog-days, then were wanting
To make this *Coblentz* quite enchanting?
But nothing 's perfect since the flood;
So summer's dust is winter's mud.

If *here* his frozen heart he hardens,
'Tis melted in the Tuilleries' gardens.
Who can resist, when there he wanders,
Midst orange-trees and oleanders,

When through the air a soft perfume
Is wafted—when parterres in bloom
Fling their bright colours on the eye,
In every gay variety;
When the young season's freshest green
Upon the quivering limes is seen,
And fountains sparkle, upward springing,
And skies are blue, and birds are singing—
Birds of another tribe than fills
Our streets with dingy plumes and bills,
(For there's no court so dark and narrow
Among us, but it boasts its sparrow)
Those birds that roost as much at ease
On chimneys as they would on trees;
Save that the dainty ones repair,
From high ideas of fresh air,
To Grosvenor-gate, or Grosvenor-square,
And haunt the blackened shrubs, and stir up
Our spleen with one eternal chirrup.

Such, London, are *thy* feather'd quires;
Thanks to thy smoke and sea-coal fires!

Enough.—From sights and sounds like these
Return we to the Tuilleries,
Whose gardens, in the month of May,
Might lead an anchoret astray.
And Charles is safe, thus tempted, is he?
When female eyes and lips are busy;
By all the coinage of Love's mint
Unbribed—the glance, the smile, the hint,
From nymphs who more than share the anguish
Of dull adorers when they languish;
Who, all compassionate and tender,
Wait but the summons to surrender.

What boots it, lovely Julia, that you
Are modelled like the Grecian statue
Whose marble warmed to flesh and blood?
That Nature, in her kindest mood,

Has given you (not to bring disgrace
On such a form) that faultless face?
Can you, thus beautiful, be sure
He won't prefer the French *tournure?*
The wisest differ, as I've heard,
About the meaning of that word:
But 'tis the bait (howe'er they wrangle)
With which those female-fishers angle.
From *me* far be it to disparage
The' attraction of their air and carriage:
But flowers and *levantines* and laces
Are great embellishers of faces;
And very ordinary women
Contrive, by dint of *tulle* and trimming,
A conjuration which atones
For bead-like eyes, and high cheek-bones,
Tempters so new and so unlike.
Our English Belles can't fail to strike,
And make each raw unpractised stranger
Quite perfect in the part of *Ranger.*

The short, quick, mincing step they walk with,
The ease and gaiety they talk with,
Are tricks on travellers, and tell,
Though short of beauty, quite as well:
Besetting with as strong temptation
Capricious Man's imagination.

In Marmontel you'll find a story
Julia, ('tis written *con amore,*)
'Mongst those which our translators, for all
Their freedom, choose to construe "*moral;*"
Though there's a difference or so,
As every boarding-school should know,
'Twixt *Moral tales* and *Contes moraux.*
There, the snub-nose of Roxalana,
To whom the Sultan could not say nay,
Allures him, when he cannot bed her
Without the sacrifice—to wed her,
Although excelled in form and features
By fifty lovely, loving creatures,

Collected from all earthly places
To court that tyrant-Turk's embraces;
For she was gay, and pert, and coolish,
And they, though fond, were flat and foolish.

Sprightly like her and debonnair,
'Tis granted, are the Gallic fair:
Besides, to arm them, Chance has sent
A still more killing instrument,
A weapon from which none escapes,
Though proof against their eyes and shapes,
The *Schal*, or rather the *Cachemire*,
So Eastern, fanciful, and dear!
The difference 'twixt the two is curious;
Cachemire is real, *Schal* is spurious;
One 's French or English, t'other Persian.—
Both were, till lately, our aversion.
Save in the winter, when designed
As screens against the frost or wind.

But be it *Cachemire*,—be it *Schal*,
Genuine, or false, 'tis all in all.
'Twill bribe a woman in a trice,
'Tis Fashion's touchstone, Virtue's price!
The sex's glory and delight,
Their thought by day, their dream by night!

In vain the Paris fair-one dresses;
Vain is the coral in her tresses,
Or on her neck.—To make her smart,
Nature in vain conspires with Art;
In vain the Loves and Graces mould her,
Unless the Cachemire's web enfold her,
Or fling its all-subduing charm
In careless dangle from her arm:
With it she triumphs, though a fright
Or slattern, in her sex's spite;
But young or old, in frost or heat,
At home, or in the crowded street,

At opera, promenade, or trim ball,
Without it she's a tinkling cymbal.

You've reason for your fears;——'tis granted
Julia, these Cachemires are enchanted,
And could not thus have turned men's heads,
But for some witchery in their threads.
Never did Fancy's widest scope
Imagine such an envelope!
In that impartial equalizer,
Most women of one shape and size are;
Each, huddled in her separate sack,
Alike in shoulders, neck, and back.
Say, Belles, why thus degrade your figure?
Why are these Cachemires thus *of rigour?* *
"O! they're so light, and soft, and warm!".
I own it;—but is *that* the charm
Which tempts their zealous votaries most,
Or whence they come, and what they cost?

* De rigueur.

Make them at home, and let their price
Sink to their value,—in a trice
The owners from their limbs would tear 'em,
And ev'n their maids would scorn to wear 'em.

You've heard, my dear, perhaps, that Juno
(She was a heathen goddess, you know,)
Once begged, to make it up with Jove,
Her girdle from the Queen of Love;
For he, who little cared about her,
Had learned to live whole weeks without her.
Scarce was it on, when lo! the spell
Succeeded, to a miracle.——
This girdle was, perchance, in all
Its virtues like a modern Shawl.
Further, the cases don't agree,
And here must end my simile;
Since where to find (but this between us)
A Belle as liberal as Venus,

Who, for a single hour, would lend
Her Cachemire to her dearest friend,
And, dizening thus a fellow-charmer,
For pleasure or for conquest arm her?

Then you've another apprehension
Almost too terrible to mention;
Lest, warmed by the luxurious fare
And wines of *Very* and *Robert*,
Poor Charles should get into the clutches
Of Livry, or of Dunan's duchess; (18)
Or be enticed, perchance, to dinner
By old De R——, that veteran sinner, (19)
Where demi-solde and demi-reps
Engage at Rouge-et-noir and Creps;
Or stake the desperate bubble-bet
On fancy-numbers at Roulette:
So tempting is that Bank of banks,
Couched on whose *Green*, in golden ranks
Napoleons shine, midst humbler francs;

So clear their wealth from puff or vapour,
And so convertible their paper,
That well may maddening crowds repair
To the rich mine that sparkles there,
In hopes, at length, by day or night,
To draw upon the Firm at sight;
The cautious Firm, that still demurs,
And draws upon its customers.
There Avarice strives, there Love of pleasure
Or desperate Want would seize the treasure.
There some grave statesman, or philosopher,
Ponders, apart, his last night's loss over,
Consulting, for his chance to win,
That oracle the *card* and *pin*, (20)
(As conjurors of former years
Predicted from the sieve and sheers,)
And ever, till his money's gone,
Keeps pricking, and shall still prick on.

Some, pouring in a fierce attack,
Set, ten times running, on the *Black*;

And thence, by chance or system led,
Shift, like boiled lobsters, to the *Red.*[21]
Some would secure the notes and cash
By dint of enterprise and dash;
Others pursue a cautious game
And venture less. 'Tis all the same;
Shoot high or low, they miss their aim;
And, keen or careless, only tend
By different paths, to one sure end.
For still the gentle *Thirty-one*
By frequent falling wears the stone;
Just as they please let punters play,
The Bank still "wins its easy way."

There are, who, when their pocket 's full
And courage high, disdain the *pull;*
Heroes who, trusting in their luck,
Right at the table run *a-muck,*

And tilt their heads against that wall
Of triple brass, called Capital,
Like English Whigs, in contemplation
Of beating the *Administration.* *

" Now for my favourite *Martingale*," (22)
Cries one, " 'twas never known to fail:
" The bank is rich, but, ere we sup,
" I'll wager that I blow it up."

He punts, and loses,—ventures on
A deeper game,—the money 's gone:—
Still doubling, " well, the worst is past,"
He cries, " this luck can never last;
" Ten thousand franks."—'Tis covered,—soon
Up comes his colour, *trente-et-un.*

* *L'Administration de Jeu.*

But, as with ravished ears and eyes
He pounces on the fancied prize,
Sudden, and spectre-like, appears
The *Après* "with the' abhorred sheers,"[23]
And, while the boldest punters quake,
Cuts off just half the mighty stake;
Which from his heap the ruthless scraper
Sweeps clean away, both gold and paper.
Thus, scarcely built, the fabric fails,
And such are favourite Martingales!
On others let us draw the curtain,
They're quite as clever—and as certain.

Well,—if folks sacrifice in France
To any deity, 'tis Chance.
The young and old, the grave and gay,
All are her votaries,—all must play;
'Tis not, in them, caprice or fashion,
But a resistless rage and passion.

Not, as with us, the Goddess dwells
In dark retreats and murky cells,
Above in clubs, below in hells;
But from a hundred shrines looks down
In triumph on her subject-town.
Through lanes and streets where'er you ramble
Or rest in Paris, you may gamble;
May risk, uncensured, what you choose,
Ten thousand franks, or forty sous.
And as the State looks on, and backs
The licensed mischief with a tax,
What marvel if the magnet draws,
When manners thus combine with laws
To lend fresh vigour to its action,
And aggravate its strong attraction?

Play has been always a temptation
In every climate, age, and nation.
Our neighbours scorn to live without it;
But then they never *cant* about it;

Nor vow their indignation rises
In thinking of our blanks and prizes;
Nor read us lectures, nor condemn
In us, the faults we share with them;
While we, so moral and demure,
So overnice, so overpure,
Who, with uplifted eyes and hands,
Deplore the sins of foreign lands,
And thus relentlessly make war
On *Creps*, *Roulette*, and *Rouge-et-noir*,
Deem it humane, and just, and wise,
To raise a tax on Lotteries!
" Cards! how atrocious!—dice! how wicked!
" But go, my friend, and buy a ticket.——
" *French* gamblers all are malefactors;
" *Ours* only innocent contractors,
" Who puff, 'tis true, but, like the quacks,
" For puffing pay another tax.
" Morals are quite a treasure, when you
" Touch not a greater—the Revenue;

" Frauds *will* exist—in vain we cramp 'em ;
" But for their instruments—we stamp 'em.
" Since roguery cannot be kept under,
" 'Tis statesman-like to share the plunder,
" And thus extracting good from evil,
" Compound with God, and cheat the Devil."
Such thy morality, Vansittart,
Thou, who the pupil of great Pitt art!

O! that there might, in England, be
A duty on Hypocrisy!
A tax on humbug, an excise
On solemn plausibilities!
No income-tax, if these were granted,
Need be endured, or could be wanted ;
Nay—Van, with an o'erflowing chest,
Might soon abolish all the rest!

But now returns (methinks 'tis time,
Julia) to home and you my rhyme.—

I freely give up this excursion,
Paris and France, to your aversion;
And would not answer for the risk,
Were Charles indulged in such a frisk.
But why, with all the Season's fun done,
Why will you keep him still in London?
Fashion, you know, prescribes the minute
When to be out of it, and in it.
She waves her wand, and woe betide
The lingering few, unless they hide,
Or swear they're passing through, to go
To Norfolk in an hour or so,
And mean, next month, to show their faces,
If possible, in twenty places.——
" Parties so pleasant, friends so pressing,
" Else such long journies are distressing;
" Bad inns,—and then the roads,—a bore
" Unless you '*sit behind the four.*'*

* In plain English, "unless you travel with four horses."

" But Tom's worth visiting, he gives
" Such shooting, and how well he lives!
" We're off—fine sport,—the weather mild,
" Birds plentiful, though rather wild.
" Acres of turnips, miles of sand,
" Few poachers, and a great command.
" You know that favourite pheasant cover,—
" No touching it, till *we* come over.
" Can't stay a moment—hope that you
" Are asked to join the next *battue*.
" The chaise is at the door—adieu!"

Such jargon are you doomed to hear—
By wholesale, every closing year,
Dealt in by those who, uninvited,
Fear you should think them *cut*, or slighted;
Who neither taste, nor hear, nor see,
But at the nod of Vanity;
Squaring by other people's notions
And habits, all their thoughts and motions;

All ruled by what the world will say—
That *Mrs. Grundy* of the Play ! *

Thus he whom Norfolk-Squires are courting *
Has, ten to one, no turn for sporting.
His best preserve, his favourite range is
Between the park and Mrs. Grange's.
He loathes a field, likes London better
Than double-barrelled gun, or setter;
And would not, if he dared, be seen
Beyond Kew-bridge, or Turnham-Green.

London ! thou comprehensive word,
What joy thy streets and squares afford !
Think not thy warm admirer rallies,
If he should add thy lanes and alleys !
Thy independence let me share,
Though clogged with smoke and foggy air;

* See the Comedy of " Speed the Plough."

Though I'm obliged my doors to make fast;
Though I can get no cream for breakfast;
Though knaves, within thee, cheat and plunder,
And fires can scarcely be kept under;
Though quite enough of force and fraud,
By Bow and Marlborough-street unawed,
At home besets us, and abroad;
And many a rook finds many a pigeon
In law, and physic, and religion,
Eager to help a thriving trade on,
And proud and happy to be preyed on.
What signify such paltry blots?
The glorious sun himself has spots.

In London, blest with competence,
With temper, health, and common sense,
None need repine or murmur,—nay,
All may be happy, in their way.
Ev'n the lone dwellings of the poor
And suffering are, at least, obscure;

And, in obscurity, exempt
From Poverty's worst scourge, contempt.
Unmarked the poor man seeks his den;
Unheeded issues forth again.
Wherefore appears he? None inquires,
Nor why nor whither he retires.
All that his pride would fain conceal,
All that Shame blushes to reveal,
The petty shifts, the grovelling cares
To which the sons of Want are heirs,
Those ills, which, grievous to be borne,
Call forth—not sympathy but scorn,
Here hidd'n, elude the searching eye
Of callous Curiosity.

And what though Poverty environ
Full many a wretch with chains of iron?
Do these in stricter bondage hold
Their slaves than manacles of gold?
The costliest fetters are as strong
As common ones, and last as long.

Whom gall they most?—'Tis doubtful which,
The very poor, or very rich;
Those scourged with wants and discontents,
Or these, with their establishments;
Victims, from real evils free,
To nerves, *cui bono?* and ennui.
Don't fancy now that this "cui bono"
Has some strange meaning, Julia. No, no.
Start not, my dear, nor blush, nor smile.
The words but ask—Is Life worth while?

Still, ghastly is thy spectre-face,
O Poverty! in every place.
But he whose lips have never quaffed
From thy lean hands the bitter draught,
Here may defy or follow Fashion;
Here may indulge his taste or passion,
Pursue his pleasures or his labours,
Aloof from Squires, unwatched by neighbours.

London, within thy ample verge
What crowds lie sheltered, or emerge
Buoyant in every shape and form,
As smiles the calm, or raves the storm!
Well may they bless the prosperous gale, if,
Unwrecked on constable or bailiff,
They reach the harbour fair and free
Of golden Mediocrity.
For, though to rail or laugh at money
Is over-dull, or over-funny,
(Since who would ridicule employment,
Or cry down power, or quiz enjoyment,)
London is, surely, to a tittle
The place for those who have but *little*.

Here I endure no throbs, no twitches
Of envy at my neighbour's riches,
But, smiling, from my window see
A dozen quite as rich as he;

Or, if I stroll, am sure to meet
A dozen more in every street,
Who like tall ships, at home, appear;
But dwindle into cock-boats here.
None are distinguished, none are rare
From wealth which hundreds round them share,
But (neutralized by one another
Whene'er they think to raise a pother)
Be they kind-hearted, or capricious,
Vain, prodigal, or avaricious,
Proud, popular, or what they will,
Are elbowed by their rivals still.

Should one among them dare be dull,
Or prose, because his pocket's full;
Should he, in breach of all decorum,
Make the least mention of the Quorum;
Drop but a hint of what transgressions
Are punished at the Quarter-sessions;

Or murmur at those vile encroachers
On rural privilege—the poachers;
Soon would a general yawn or cough
From such a trespass *warn him off*,
Spite of his India-bonds, and rents,
His acres, and his three-per-cents.
None would endure such parish-prate,
Were half the island his estate;
Though he in ready cash were sharing
The wealth, without the sense, of Baring.

A village is a hive of glass.
There nothing undescried can pa...
There all may study, at their ease,
The forms and motions of the bees;
What wax or honey each brings home
To swell the treasures of the comb,
Upon his loaded thighs and wings,
And which are drones, and which have stings;

(Stings, in the hive, and wax, and honey,
Are, in the village, power and money)
Whether in consequence is higher
The Rector, or the neighbouring Squire,
Or he, the' Attorney of the place,
With knocker brazen as his face.

But count the motes or specks who can
On this our huge Leviathan!
Or note, with curious pencil, down
The motions of this Monster-town!
Weak is the voice of Slander here;
Not half her venom taints the ear.
None feel the fulness of her power,
"Her iron scourge, or torturing hour;"
And yet, so general is the scrape,
Few from her malice quite escape;
All, in a common fate confounded,
Are slightly scratched, none deeply wounded.

Such is The Town!—Act right or wrong,
None will abuse or praise you *long*.
The moments you enjoy or bear
Soon pass, and then——you've had your share.
The idlest babbler can't afford
To treat you with another word;
The jest has lost its sting, the tale
Grows, in its very utterance, stale;
Trifling, important, many, few,
All, to be talked of, must be *new*.

Here stands proclaimed a general mart.
Traffic who will. Here science, art,
Wit, learning, courage, genius, sense,
And every kind of excellence
In the thronged lists of wealth and fame,
Contend for fortune, or a name;
And, as Fate favours them or crosses,
Are busied in their gains or losses.

Grant that, from feebleness of will,
From indolence, or want of skill,
Not venturing on a game so high,
You view it as a stander-by;
A risk so great, so large a stake,
Would keep the heaviest eyes awake.

But London binds me by a new tie.
Mark how the streets are paved with beauty!
With what defiance in their eye
The tyrants of the sex pass by!
Shine but the sun, they swarm uncounted,
On foot, in carriages, or mounted;
Or, smiling, people the balconies
Near which stands many a smart Adonis,
Up-gazing at some fair Amanda
Who gently paces the *veranda*,
And, like a nymph among the flowers
That blossom in enchanted bowers,

Seems with her fairy-foot to set (24).
The stock, sweet-pea, and mignionette,
Whose mingled Covent-garden sweets
Are wafted o'er the watered streets.

Look round, inconstant Man! whate'er
Your shifting taste,—for brown, or fair;
Whether, allured by thin or plump,
You like a may-pole or a dump,
Look but around—secure to find
The very creature to your mind.
Who, with a turn for eyes and shapes,
From such variety escapes?
In vain he lifts in his defence
Thy leaden shield, Indifference;
A thousand arrows, if he stirs,
Stick in his skirts, like Gulliver's,
Aimed from above, below, around,
And, though at random, sure to wound.

But, since inflicted oft in sport, all
These wounds are luckily not mortal;
While every *single* smile or frown
Is deadly in a country-town.
There, rustic Love, thy feeblest dart
Strikes to and rankles in the heart!

But Autumn comes.—The die is cast;
And London must be left at last.
What endless shifts, what lame excuses
Each "longing, lingering look" produces;
Till we are driven, perforce, away,
Loth to depart, ashamed to stay!
Yet Fate our nerves, in mercy, spares;
And seldom takes us unawares.
The' unwelcome news by many a token
To practised eyes and ears is broken;
Ne'er does the mournful hour draw nigh
Unmarked by many a prodigy.

Through silent and deserted streets
No kindred form the lounger meets;
No curricle nor chariot wears
The pavement of the western squares;
But hackney-coachmen fold their hands,
And sleep, despairing, on their stands;
Or, roused, make signs with whip and fingers
To tempt the bashful *fare*, who lingers
Doubtful to mount or not, and staring
At houses painting and repairing.
You trace no fresh-caught rustic dodging
Now here, now there, to find a lodging,
Indifferent to what rent he's liable,
So that the street is "*undeniable*,"
Or vainly tugging at the bells
Of twenty over-crammed hotels.

Shot from yon *Heavenly Bow*, at White's,(25)
No critic-arrow now alights

On some unconscious passer-by,
Whose cape's an inch too low or high;
Whose doctrines are unsound in hat,
In boots, in trowsers, or cravat;
On him who braves the shame and guilt
Of gig or Tilbury ill-built;
Sports a barouche with pannels darker
Than the last shade turned out by Barker;
Or canters, with an awkward seat
And badly mounted, up the street.
No laugh confounds the luckless girl
Whose stubborn hair disdains to curl,
Who, large in foot, and long in waist,
Shows want of blood, as well as taste:
Silenced awhile that dreadful battery
Whence never issued sound of flattery;
That whole artillery of jokes,
Levelled point-blank at humdrum folks;
Who now, no longer kept in awe
By Fashion's judges, or her law,

Close by THE WINDOW, at their ease,
Strut, with what looks and clothes they please!

No longer, from the footman's thumb
And finger, peals of thunder come.
Closed are the doors, the knockers dumb.
No cards, in *broad-cast* sown about,
Alarm us with a brim-full rout;
For routs, although they scorn to finish
Ev'n in the *dog-nights*, must diminish.
Then, to ensure the crowd they wish, all
Contrive a method artificial,
Since nothing's flat and undesirable
Like open space, and air respirable!
Their lessening throngs in haste they muster,
And in some narrow door-way cluster,
Smiling, when novices too shy
In vain to force the barrier try,
Squeeze, press—do all things but get by;

While all beyond those *Straits* is Ocean
Pacific, without life or motion!

No longer in a stormy night,
(The London-Coach-makers' delight)
Comes on the startled ear, from far,
The hubbub of domestic war
In yonder Square, where half the town
Are taking up, and setting down,
In breathless haste, amidst the din
Of drunken coachmen cutting in,
Hushed is the sound of swearing, lashing,
Of tangled wheels together clashing,
Of glasses shivering, pannels crashing,
As thus they try their rival forces
In whips, and carriages, and horses.
What though their mistresses should fret,
Be frightened, trampled on, or wet?
How, but by prancing in the mud,
Can pampered cattle show their blood?

Honour's at stake;—and what is comfort,
Safety, or health, or any sum for't?
The bills, 'tis true, to those up-stairs,
Are somewhat heavy, for repairs;
But courage, coachmen! Such disasters
Are not your business, but your masters'.

Now many a pleasant hungry sinner
Finds tapering off the' accustomed dinner,
And reads no more, on pasteboard nicely
Ranged o'er his chimney, "Eight precisely.'
No crow-quill notes with corners three,
Littered about for friends to see,
Coax him to *tête-à-têtes*, and tea.
Ungreeted, at his morning station,
Ev'n by a verbal invitation,
Yet lingering till the chaise is gone
Which holds the last Amphitryon,
Late and alone he dines at Brooks's;
Tries what a news-paper or book says,

Till half past ten; and then, poor man,
Gets through the evening as he can.

'Tis August. Rays of fiercer heat
Full on the scorching pavement beat,
As o'er it the faint breeze, by fits
Alternate, blows and intermits.
For short-lived green, a russet brown
Stains every withering shrub in Town.
Darkening the air, in clouds arise
The' Egyptian plagues of dust and flies;
And wasps, those foragers voracious,
Buzz through the shops, in swarms audacious.
At rest, in motion—forced to roam
Abroad, or to remain at home,
Nature proclaims one common lot
For all conditions—'Be ye hot!'
Day is intolerable—night
As close and suffocating quite;

And still the mercury mounts higher,
Till London seems *again* on fire!

Now is the time, ye flush of money,
To vest it in an eight-oared Funny;
Or man some stately barge, and in it
Embark the "Cynthia of the minute;"
To quit old scores by land, and give her
A day's amusement on the River.
'Tis hers to name the party; they
Have but one duty—to obey.
For, when aloft the Dog-star flames,
So hot a press is on the Thames,
Protections are so disregarded,
That none escape, unless they are dead.
As, in the Isles between the tropics,
(How similes set off one's topics!)
Whether the influence of the sun,
Or softer feelings urge them on,

Land-crabs, at certain times, agree
To quit the mountains for the sea,
So these in shoals push off from town:
And, as the tide runs up or down,
A little late perhaps, embark
For Richmond-hill or Greenwich-park.
Some shoot the bridge, and downward trip
Among the shipping, to the *Ship*;
Some seek a less encumbered quarter,
The Castle, or the Star and Garter.
Both have their prospects, various, gay
And striking, in a different way:
Here woods—there masts—in these, employment
Seems uppermost, in those enjoyment;
Here is the busy East expressed,
There, all the luxury of the West;
But Ships or Castles, Parks or Hills,
Small is the difference—in their bills.
Admire the views, ye funnies, barges,
And boats—but tremble at the charges.

See, how beneath the cloudless beams
Of a hot sun the River steams!
Hushed is the breeze; a dazzling glare,
Shot from the water, fires the air.
And since, alas! in sultry weather
Few are the *amateurs* who feather
And pull, like watermen, together,
Long ere the destined voyage is ended,
Full many a *dashing* oar 's suspended,
Till, checked awhile, beneath the awning
Breaks out, at length, a general yawning;
As melting in "day's garish eye,"
Becalmed and motionless they lie.
Or worse befalls. For oft a raw gust
Broods o'er the burning brow of August,
And "hushed, expects" throughout the day,
"In grim repose its evening prey."
Bursting at last, a sudden squall
Drenches the ladies near Black-wall;

Or the vext waters make a breach
Clean over them in Chelsea-reach.

How in this moment will they hate
The very mention of *White-Bait*,
And every over-rated dish
Of pond, and sea, and river-fish!
How long for home and London-smoke,
And loathe the Ship and Artichoke!
For, fair ones, what are woods and hills,
Music and feasts, to damps and chills?
What, if you can't contrive to parry
The dose-ing, sleek apothecary?
If, jaded ere you land and sup,
Next morning you are all laid up,
Burning whole days and nights, or freezing;
And coughing for whole months, or sneezing?

Sometimes (the chance is rare indeed)
I own these parties *may* succeed,

When wind and tide and settled weather
Club all their influence together;
When Beauty like the day is bright,
And spirits as the breeze are light;
When through alternate ebbs and flows
Briskly the barge or wherry goes;
And on its course, on either side,
Shines the green landscape's glittering pride.
What then? The River and its banks
For one such prize yield twenty blanks.

Now many a city-wife and daughter
Feels that the dipping rage has caught her.
Scarce can they rest upon their pillows,
For musing on machines and billows;
Or, should they slumber, 'tis to dream
All night of Margate and of Steam;
Of Steam, much stronger than a giant,
And, duly conjured, more compliant.

At eight, that bustling happy hour,
His boat is ready at the Tower.
Embarked, they catch the sound, and feel
The thumping motion of his wheel:
Lashed into foam by ceaseless strokes,
The River roars, the funnel smokes,
As onward, like an arrow, shoots
The Giant, with his seven-league boots;
Spite of their crowded sails, outstripping
With ease the speed of all the shipping
Through every reach—mast following mast
Descried, approached, o'ertaken, passed.
Look where you will, you find no traces
Of qualm-anticipating faces
From shifting helm or taught lee-braces;
Ills with which Fate the bliss alloys,
Else perfect, of the Margate-hoys.
No calm, so dead that nothing stirs,
Baffles the sea-sick passengers.

With ecstacy no tongue can utter,
They take to tea and bread-and-butter;
On the smooth deck some stretch their legs,
Some feast below on toast and eggs;
As, cheered by clarinet and song,
Ten knots an hour, they spank along,
(Sure at their destined port to sup,
Unless, perchance, they're all blown up)
By Graves-end, South-end, through the Nore,
Till the boat lands them all, at four,
Exulting, on the Margate-shore!

These Kent delights—while others post
As nimbly to the Sussex-coast,
Eager to tread the turf that crowns
The swelling surface of the downs.
Starting each hour, ere day begins
Till evening falls, from twenty inns,
Inside and out, a clustering load,
They spin along the level road;

That road which, oft curtailed, is passed
Each year more quickly than the last.
What crowds from every coach alight on
The russet Steyne, and beach of Brighton!
To view from its parades and cliffs
Gulls, bathers, fishermen, and skiffs;
To pay for appetite and air
The price of heat, and dust, and glare!
To watch, by day, the surf in motion
Unwearied, from the boisterous ocean;
And, ancle-deep in burning shingles,
Sigh for green fields and shady dingles!
Or pace along the shore, remarking
A shoal of passengers embarking
(Well if they don't repent the step)
To join the packet for *Dieppe;*
Looking as grave as undertakers,
Their boat half swamped among the breakers,
Some sick, all terrified, in crossing
To where the distant bark lies tossing!

To note, by night, with magnanimity
The fluttering of unlined dimity,
As through the room the curtains sail,
Obedient to the western gale;
While the rain trickles through the roof,
And scarce a pane is water-proof.
To feel how time and use disables;
Through years of letting; chairs and tables;
Or trace the moon-beams on the foam,
And muse on comforts left at home!

Now heavy cost and profits small
Have closed the gardens of Vauxhall.
No more their blue and brilliant lights
Mount through the air, on Gala-nights;
While shouts are heard, amidst the rockets
And Roman candles—"Mind your pockets."
No crowds across the bridges hurry
To weep at Melodrames in Surrey,
Whither they flocked, in merrier times,
To split their sides at Pantomimes.

But wherefore name such low amusement,
For vulgar cits alone or Jews meant,
When ev'n assemblies are a bore,
And Mathews is at home no more!

Now through her woods *The Country* calls,
And echoes talk, along her halls,
Of many a kitchen blazing hot,
Of many a cellar cool as grot;
Each with its rich abundance stored,
To crown the hospitable board,
Where social ease, and welcome warm,
(How ill exchanged for state and form!)
Give freedom to each happy guest,
Never tormented, never pressed
Except—to do what suits him best.

Now cloudless skies their heat redouble;
The "Swart Star" rages o'er the stubble.
Smote by his beams, the river shrinks,
The dusty common yawns in chinks;

Dogs in the fancied chase grow hot, (26)
And birds impatient to be shot.
These signs, and more—but 'twould encumber
My verse to reckon up their number,
The earth in short, the air, the sun,
Proclaim The Capital undone.

Julia, forgive me this digression,
And summon all your self-possession
To listen to a truth, unnettled,
By every day's experience settled:
That absence, if not over-long
And frequent, can do love no wrong;
That to the nymph for whom he burns
With fresh delight her swain returns,
After a trifling separation,——
Thus, for example, the Vacation,
Beckoning to rural leisure down
Lawyers and lovers too from town,

By well-timed absence both recruits,
And fits them for their several suits.
That past, the chase, again renewed,
With double ardour is pursued.

Give ear to my prophetic rhyme,
Unthinking girl—and, warned in time,
Deem not the well-meant hint officious;
That we he-creatures are capricious;
That when your charms have ceased to blind us,
Nor prayers can move, nor oaths can bind us.
The fairest nymphs that ever flirted
Have by their shepherds been deserted.
See, in their mid-career, the comely
Supplanted by the coarse and homely;
The fond, the generous, and the true,
Yield to the heartless and the new!
Some with less feeling or remorse
Will change their mistress than their horse;

Destined, when all their swops are past,
To get some sorry jade at last.

Let but a single spot begin
To stain the brightness of the skin [27]
Where York and Lancaster combine
Their roses in those cheeks of thine;
Let him detect a second wrinkle;
He'll send you packing in a twinkle,
And seek another in your room
Of smoother grain, and fresher bloom.
From eyes once dimmed, unheeded flow
The bitter tears of fruitless woe.
The faded bosom Man forsakes,
Though the poor heart beneath it breaks.
Love dies, as surely as 'tis born,
Killed by aversion, slight, or scorn,
Those painful deaths! A milder end
Cools down a lover to a friend.

Trust not your beauty nor your youth,
Nor learn too late the mournful truth,
That Woman lost, when Man is sated,
Within two points of being hated,
Luffs (to the threatening danger blind),
In vain so *very* near the wind.
Onward she madly steers, and back,
Weathering the land on neither tack.
Breakers on every side appear;
No light's displayed, no harbour near,
The tempest raves, the billows roar
In thunder on the rocky shore;
Her anchors drag, her cables part—
Hers is the shipwreck of the heart!

But, having seen you in a pet afore,
I dread it—so will drop the metaphor,
And offer you a wholesome slice
Of plain, substantial, good advice.

One day (pray take the fact for granted)
One day or other, you'll be *planted*;*
Or if from habit, chance, or whim,
He clings to you, you'll break with him.
Then where can be the harm, I wonder,
Of living now and then asunder?
"How hard to separate!" you cry.
Mistaken Julia, do but try.
Of this same absence; now, suppose
You swallow first a moderate dose,
Three months or so,—then make it stronger,
And part for half a year or longer;
Thus you gain courage by degrees;
Link after link is snapped with ease,
Till, by one last combined endeavour,
Out come the words "Farewell for ever!"

To set this new machinery spinning,
(Since half the task is in beginning)

* Plantée là.

Open your cage, and let him go;
Nay, force him, indolent or no,
To visit, when the winter ends
With August, all his country friends,
Midst manors, castles, lodges, halls,
Where Fashion leads or Fancy calls;
And send him, with a lengthened chain,
Back to his once-loved sports again.

Now, through the season (such the fruits
Of love like yours) he never shoots;
So that you've lost those welcome presents
Of hares and partridges and pheasants,
Which, when the holidays drew near,
Sent to enrich your Christmas cheer,
Oft on the turkeys would encroach
That dangled from the Norfolk-coach.
Say, Julia, was it over-wise
To shorten thus your own supplies?

To thwart your lover, wherefore spite
Thus your own taste and appetite?
Could you resign without regret
These dainties, or the day forget
When last he purchased, by a grant on
His dipped estate, a gun from *Manton*,
(No matter which, they're two, you know,
Some fancy *John*, and others *Joe*,)
That gun of guns, which none but ninnies
Could reckon dear at sixty guineas?
Ev'n the least envious spectator
Might grudge him such a detonator,
Got up with all the new devices
Afforded at such moderate prices
That some, perhaps too partial, say
They are not sold, but given away.
Scarce have we thought the stories long,
Midst cooling muffins and Souchong,
Of all the head (he scorned to brag)
Brought, by that matchless gun, to bag.

O! why are *Mantons* such as these
Just like the annuals one sees
At Messrs. Lee and Kennedy's;
Those plants so beautiful and dear
That never last a second year!

Fain, while my Muse my memory jogs,
Fain would I celebrate his dogs;
But how do justice to their breed,
Their perfect breaking, nose, and speed?
Too modest am I to aspire
Ev'n to a sketch of his attire;
Since ne'er was such a brown and green
In gaiters, or in jacket seen.
Indeed no partridge could do less
Than tremble at the shooting-dress
In which, through all the live-long day,
Fresh and untired, he blazed away,
Scrambling through bush and briar, to trace
Haply, but *half* another brace;

Till, near the house, one might remark
From both his barrels, just at dark,
Two short, smart pops,—ill omened sound,
Echoed o'er many a turnip-ground,
Where coveys fed, in fear and sorrow
Prophetic of their fate to-morrow.

In wood or field, at any game
Unerring was his practised aim;
Whether with many, or with few,
Beating the tangled thicket through,
He braved the perilous *battue*;
Whether he watched where wild-ducks spring
Scared from the lake, and clamouring;
Or marked, within some dingle warm,
The woodcock's solitary form;
Or, in the sedges ancle-deep,
Grudged not for snipes, whole hours, to creep;
And seldom missing, as I've heard,
Snipe, wild-duck, pheasant, cock, or bird,

He never, (this I don't pretend
To vouch for) never winged a friend;
Nor, urged by Vanity to break
The golden rule of give and take,
Risked, to secure a foremost place,
The peppering of his neighbour's face.
In short he was, as rumour runs,
The very Paragon of *Guns!*

Now, the least mention of preserves,
Turnips, or stubbles, shakes his nerves;
Now, careless if the noise be louder
From gun, or fulminating-powder,
Through autumn's heat, through winter's rigour,
The recreant never draws a trigger.
His game-book's lost, his pointers stray,
And his crack *Manton*'s given away!

I question if, another year,
You'll let him hunt in Leicestershire;

Where only, underneath the sun,
A horse can go, a dog can run.
Once how he flew, like lightning, down
To Melton, and then back to town,
In quick alternate motion tost,
Like shuttlecock, by thaw and frost!
The merest novice in the school
Of Meynel must obey the rule.
In vain the scarlet coat he boasts,
In vain he hunts—unless he posts.
It freezes.—Rattling to the door,
Upwhirls his wadded chaise and four.
He's in, he's off,—nor marks (so easy
The motion) how the roads grow greasy;
How clogged his wheels, how slow they travel
Through clinging clay, and grinding gravel;
How drops begin to shower from leaves,
And icicles to melt on eaves;
The country, ere he reaches town,
Looking, each mile, more soft and brown,

Till Highgate's arch-wayed hill is past,
And all beyond is mire at last.
Mire,—how delightful!—in a trice
He dashes back to meet—the ice.
Frost, like a bailiff or a constable,
Cries 'stand!'—and claps him up at Dunstable;
Showing, if on he dares to go,
For writ or staff—the drifted snow.
There, at the Sugar-Loaf, a guest
Reluctant under close arrest,
Confined till larks and patience fail him,
He waits another thaw to bail him.
Thus, by arrangements so judicious,
(As English seasons are capricious,)
The winter through, his chief abode
Must be at inns, or on the road;
Far from his grooms, and favourite stud,
The very quintessence of blood;
As distant as the merest stranger
From that mysterious rack and manger

Where many a hunter, duly fed,
Unconsciously eats off his head,
Destined at last, as oft befalls,
To get it back—at Tattersal's.

No more the punctual groom shall shake
His master till they *both* awake,
To listen to the wind and rain
At six, loud clattering on the pane,
And envy those who stretch and yawn,
Careless of bleak December's dawn;
Or doze, perchance, some lie inventing
To shirk this famous day for scenting,
To get the' inexorable groom,
And his d—d candle from the room;
While gusts more strong, and showers more thick,
Give him strange thoughts of shamming sick:
Till, mindful of his former fame,
He combats drowsiness with shame;

Till (resolution gathering strength,
And Slumber from his limbs at length
Loosening the chains which bind the lazy)
He votes the morning only *hazy*;
"Screws," with a steady hand and face,
His "courage to the sticking-place,"
And, ere the half-hour's chimes are counted,
Is fairly up, equipped, and mounted.

No more he trots, (like folks who trip
Into a boat to join a ship,)
Mud-booted, to the ground, on hack;
Nor creeps, on jaded hunter, back
Over the heath, along the lane,
Guessing and floundering in the rain;
The mile-stone missed, the finger-post
Then farthest, when he needs it most;
Haunted, amidst the deepening gloom,
By phantoms of that eating-room

Where the bright blaze good cheer and wine
Might tempt worse appetites to dine;
And musing on what hours may pass
Ere his the morsel, or the glass:
No brighter prospect to beguile
The weary length of many a mile!
No spark of all the chase's heat
Left in his numbed and dangling feet!
Nor chance of rest, nor hope to sup,
Unless the friendly moon gets up,
And, faintly struggling through the fog,
Hints, just in time, —"Beware the bog!"

How do benighted sportsmen roam,
When, haply, not three fields from home;
Like Tony's mother, led astray
By that spoiled urchin in the Play,*

* She Stoops to Conquer.

Who while he takes her, round about,
Back to the spot whence both set out,
Still, to alarm the silly woman,
Talks of 'Squash Lane,' and 'Crackskull Common!'

Thus in the dark he rode to cover;
Thus from the death, when all was over.
For, like a shrimp, a fox-chase fails,
Both have but sorry heads and tails.
Talk of their flavour,—'tis a riddle,
Unless you try them in the middle.
But Charles was still unflinching found,
If outward, or if homeward bound;
Patient, untired,—and, when he hunted,
Careless what dangers he affronted.
Then with firm seat, and bosom steeled,
He shone the foremost of the field;
All doubting if, in skill and force,
He was the cleverer, or his horse.

Close to the hounds, the triumph filled
His heart with rapture, if they killed;
And if they failed,—why, riding hard,
Like Virtue, was its own reward.
His was the transport that atones
For broken limbs and collar-bones;
His all the energies which urge on
Men, in defiance of the surgeon,
Far from their wives and tender pledges,
Dashing o'er fences, ditches, hedges,
Where none would venture but a fool
Or madman, if his blood was cool.

A Nimrod he, from taste and passion—
Unlike the ill-starred slave of Fashion
Who hunts, o'er meaner sportsmen crowing,
In Leicestershire, because 'tis knowing;
Because, at Melton, all partakers
In hunting should be men of acres,

Or flush of money in the Stocks,
In order to *suppress* the fox;— *
That secret foe to southern breezes;
That inward chuckler when it freezes,
When scentless air and hardened soil
Save both his credit and his toil;
When, nothing loth, he flies to meet
Those loungers in St. James's street,
Who break, like him, the Melton-tether,
Enjoying, while they d—n, the weather.
But suddenly, unused to stay
Our winter through, the frost gives way,
The fatal hour is come—is past;
And, *malgré lui*, he goes at last
Back to his post to bear the brunt
And feign the raptures of the hunt!

* "Il faut *supprimer* les renards."
Madame de Staël.

Behold him there, the luckless varlet,
In oil-skin hat, in coat of scarlet,
Superbly mounted, duly dressed,
And looking lively, though distrest!
Think not, of all who there assemble
With chattering teeth, and limbs that tremble,
(For though they mind not cold a straw,
What's half so chilly as a thaw?)
Think not that, with a common aim
And garb, their feelings are the same.
No, no,—the sport has many a lover
As cool as he, at every cover.

But soon, whate'er they feel or feign,
The chaff is winnowed from the grain.
They find;—hark forward! off they go
To the mad cry of Tally Ho!
Affecting now to urge the speed
And rouse the courage of his steed,

What, though he spurs, and plies the lash?—
'Tis but to counterfeit a dash,
And seem not only stout, but rash.
Soon, by experience dearly bought,
Soon will the' aspiring Youth be taught
That valour is a poor possession,
Without its better half, discretion.

Warned by the knowing ones to keep
Aloof from every useless leap,
(Since oft, in their unruly bounds,
Horses *throw off*, as well as hounds)
To copy those whose practised eye
Turns to the well-known gap, hard-by,
He learns, in rising at a gate,
The value of the hint too late.
For, awkward where he should be limber,
Just as 'tis cleared, he *touches timber*;
Falls, and before he can recover him,
Aghast, sees half the field ride over him;

A perfect judge, though bruised to jelly,
Of every horse's girth and belly.
Thrice he his suppliant arms extends
In vain to all his dearest friends;
And lies, perchance, where Fate has spilled him
Till they have run the fox and killed him!

Julia, you need not coax, nor tease,
Did Charles resemble one of these,
Who care not what their hunters cost
To buy or keep, if seldom crost.
But he, who holds the chase so dear,
Whose breed is thorough Leicestershire
He of the true, the genuine sort,
Whose heart and soul are in the sport,
Thus unappointed and unhorsed,
From stud and kennel thus divorced,
At once of pleasure thus debarred
And exercise, may think it hard;

And, though implicit to a tittle,
May possibly demur a little.
The only secret to secure
Obedience is to keep him poor.
Money alone (as sportsmen know
Full well, by what they pay—or owe)
Makes Melton-mares and horses go.

But not content (blush, Julia, blush!)
To wean him from the fox's brush,
From pouches, belts, and barrels double,
From covies, covers, woods, and stubble,
These mortal injuries to crown,
How do you treat your slave in town!
Yes, tyrant, out it all shall come.—
Whoever calls, he's not at home,
But, scudding to his chamber runs,
As if all visitors were duns;

As if some spectre crossed his eyes,
Or men were women in disguise.
For hours in vain I knock and ring;
He's always at your apron-string;
Except when, sometimes, unawares
I chance to catch him on the stairs,
Looking, like animals just tamed,
Half sinister, and half ashamed.

I know (but, faith, the thing's too risible)
'Tis by your orders he 's invisible.
Women, we want no ghost to tell us,
Have been, and are, and will be jealous;
With a full license thus to vex
Themselves, their lovers, and their sex:
But when their jealousy extends
To frowning on their lover's friends,
(Readers, remember, on your lives,
Not to apply these hints to wives;

Though, ere the honey-moon has fleeted,
Thus many a husband's friends are treated)
When women thus delight to sever
Men's early sympathies for ever;
By all that binds the heart secured,
In childhood nursed, by age matured;
Why call their struggles to remove
These landmarks by the name of love?
Such points *my* judgment may be rash on;
But surely 'tis a selfish passion,
Masking beneath a false pretence
The boundless thirst of influence.
Their long-abused, ill-gotten power,
They feel may vanish in an hour,
Melted away, like thawing ice,
Before a little good advice.

Julia, my dear, how long, I wonder,
Must Charles and I be kept asunder,

Lest a friend's precept and example
Should teach him on his chains to trample?
Lest, questioned close and tutored well,
Your weary subject should rebel?
Lest your poor servant, one fine morning,
Should rise, and give his mistress warning?

I war not thus, (dismiss your fears)
For Man's resolves 'gainst Woman's tears.
Whether you quarrel or agree,
Mine is an armed neutrality.
Charles has my full consent to yield,
And leave you mistress of the field;
Or, if despair has made him stout,
With his fair foe to fight it out.

But wherefore thus provoke hostilities?
Think, Julia, think how rash and silly 'tis!
My counsel ends as it began.
Patch up a treaty, while you can.

Abate your power,—'tis overgrown.
Unsafe is a despotic throne.
Give up departments you can spare,
And yield a province here and there——
Warned by *his* fate whose stubborn *pride*
Clung to an empire stretched *too* wide;
Who, in one stake, to end the game,
Heaped power, and liberty, and fame;
Among the royal punters tost it,
Cried "Seven's the main," threw crabs, and lost it!

Be not Napoleon's madness thine.
Accept the boundary of the Rhine;
Make promises and resolutions,
And talk at least of constitutions;
Or soon the angry Fates will frown
On Beauty in an *iron crown*,
And Fortune tarnish every gem
That glitters in your diadem.

Ev'n now, my charmer, there's a scrape
At hand, not easy to escape.
Pray, how will you secure your lover
Till these elections are blown over?
You know his age,—he's twenty-one;
And may, though more than half undone,
Sit by some friendly Jew's advance,
Or slip into a seat by chance:
For things which every body dreads
Are often thrown at people's heads.
'Tis thus that peerages are proffered,
And ribbons pressed, and mitres offered.
There's no protection, no defence
Against this gentle violence.
Some receive pensions, others places,
As from the hands of all the Graces.
'They never had the slightest notion,—
'Twas all the Minister's own motion;
'They fight, 'tis true, beneath his banner;
'But—given in such a handsome manner—

'Never solicited or troubled—
'They feel the obligation doubled.'
Ask not the meaning, or the force
Of words like these—They're words of course;
Sounds which, however strange to utter,
Add relish to men's bread and butter;
Like lowings heard in field or wood
When sated cattle chew the cud.

Charles, half asleep, thus gains the stake
From hundreds round him wide awake;
Thus, sudden greatness thrust upon him,
Ambition wins, as Love has won him.
Yet stay,—I've hit upon a plan.
Let him escape you, if he can.
I saw him act his mother's maid
Not badly, at a masquerade;
'Twas quite excusable to err
A little in the character;

And folks kept asking, one and all,
If females ever grew so tall.
Some criticised his gait, I'm told,
While others thought his eyes too bold;
Still, by the smoothness of his chin,
The knowing ones were taken in;
And the best judges in the room
Swore his French rouge was real bloom.
Then who could guess the secret?—No man,
Were you to dress him like a woman.

Once (long ago and far away)
A boy was thus disguised, they say.[28]
His age was just fifteen, and his chief
Amusement fisty-cuffs and mischief.
So, when he asked to change his hoop
For a light company or troop,
They shut him up, aloof from slaughter,
With his old landlord's buxom daughter;

To conjugate, with kindling senses,
I love, through all its moods and tenses;
To win her easy heart, and feel
His own as tender as the heel
In which alone the lying fable
Assures us he was vulnerable.
Doubtless they trusted, till the scrape
Was blazoned in her altered shape,
That such a boy would be a shy mate.—
But Turkey is so warm a climate!

To hasten from this dangerous theme,
What think you, Julia, of my scheme?
Charles, what with petticoat, and pin,
Tucker, and cap, *must* stay within.
Safe, till it suits you to unfrock him,
Up in your *boudoir* you may lock him.
Else, in his rambles, he might meet
Some bustling agent in the street; (29)

Some lordly patron there might woo him,
Some jobber take a fancy to him;
As, though he'll seldom strain his throat
In making speeches, he can *vote*.
Down comes the writ—they meet—they choose him—
He takes to business—and you lose him.

And now, with no design to quiz,
I'll tell you what this *business* is,
This mute, inglorious toil and pain
That wears the body, not the brain.—
Much more in many cases,—here
Much less is meant than meets the ear.
Just listen, and you'll find a knack 'tis
Soon mastered by a little practice.

To calculate, with due precision,
The moment of the next division;

The art in proper time to cough;
The mysteries of pairing off;
When to be mute, and when to cheer
A modest member with a "Hear;"
The secret, ere debates begin,
Of whipping out—and whipping in
From Bellamy's, with checked digestion,
Just as the Speaker puts the question;
Such, Julia, are the hard conditions
Imposed on sucking politicians!

But Charles must sacrifice his ease
Sometimes, to heavier tasks than these.
Perchance, to settle who shall sit, he
Is tethered to some dull committee,
Where learned lawyers, having wrangled
For months, leave matters more entangled.
Joy to the candidates who pay
From ebbing purses, day by day,

Hundreds for every fresh objection
Which leads them to a *void election!*
Or, at the opening of the session,
(Uniting courage with discretion)
Must strive his faltering tongue to teach
The echo of a royal speech,
In which the mover and the seconder
Too oft, alas! though clever reckon'd, err;
Or, when he meditates some far jaunt,
Is taken captive by the Serjeant,
From whose firm grasp no custodee
E'er yet escaped—without a fee;
Or posts, from some far-distant hall
Up, through ten counties, to a Call;
Or hurrying down at four (how pleasant!)
Sees, in dismay, not forty present,
Yet lingers, till, to end his doubt,
The punctual Speaker counts them out;
Or, fumbling at the door, is shocked
To find it mercilessly locked;

Or, when the weather warmer waxes,
Must help Vansittart through his taxes,
And, threatening those who heavy think 'em
With the laid ghost of that on Income,
Cry "question!" when the strongest side
To *conquer*—has but to *divide*.

What, though thy floor, St. Stephen, yield
To gifted minds a glorious field;
Though rich the prize of those who aim
Within thy walls at power and fame,
And, through the struggles of debate,
Rule, or aspire to rule the State;
Yet who in mere routine would waste
One grain of knowledge, sense, or taste?
Who, through a tedious session, bear
To slumber in the tainted air
Of crowded benches, glad to make
His dinner on a tough beef-steak;

Or (summoned by a Treasury-note)
Night after night to sit and vote,
A mere machine, with no dominion
Over his seat or his opinion;
Only to frank an ounce, and see
On all his letters' backs M. P.!

Who would, as day begins to peep,
(The house half hungry, half asleep)
With many a yawn and inward curse,
Hear a bad speech—or make a worse?
Who from his party, like a rat, run,
To humour some capricious patron,
Some trimming father, whom his son dreads;
When he might take the Chiltern Hundreds,
And in a trice resign his seat?
But that the terror of the Fleet,
Or King's Bench prison, from whose bourne
'Tis not so easy to return,

Urges the slave, with puzzled will,
To bear a heavier bondage still.

Folks rise and flourish and are undone
Nowhere so quickly as in London.
Sudden they mount—like meteors glare—
Then, bursting, vanish into air;
And none but conjurors can know
Or whence they come, or where they go.
So Charles, by folly or by fate
Fall'n from his high and palmy state,
By thus indulging all his senses
And yours, my dear, in all expenses;
(Lavish in eating, drinking, clothing;
Grudging himself and Julia nothing)
By dint of cost 'twere vain to guess
In that grand article, your dress;
Your bracelets, necklaces, and rings,
And twenty more superfluous things *

* "Ce superflu, si nécessaire."
Voltaire.

So necessary, that they must,
When money fails; be had on trust;
Your cottage, and your town-abode,
(North, to be sure, of Oxford-Road)
Your suppers, diamonds, Opera-box,
And your snug income in the Stocks,—
Has managed, God knows how, to get
Of late a *little* into debt.

But what is mortgage, bill, or bond,
For one so beautiful and fond?
How small a sacrifice for you it is
That the long list of his annuities
Encumbers with a lasting stain
Half the black Book in Chancery-Lane.
That here a stop-gap, there a hedge,
Has left him nothing now to pledge!
These all are trifles light as air,
But, thoughtless Julia, have a care;

Reflect how oft from little things
Some great unlooked-for mischief springs.
At last, impoverished, threatened, harassed,
By Jews denied, by duns embarrassed,
No underwriter now to *do* him,
No Square-toes left to listen to him;
He *may*, when all resources fail,
Prefer—a patron to a jail! (30)

Methinks I see the tempters watch him
Thus hampered, till at length they catch him
Pondering (as he is not the best head)
Whether to frank, or be arrested;
Whether with creditors to grapple,
Or brave them in St. Stephen's chapel.
This is the moment—they intreat,
Implore him to accept a seat;
Or (as their boroughs are implicit,
And scarce expect their members' visit)

Without ev'n asking his consent,
Return him into Parliament.

But, Julia, here, methinks, I'd better
Close this unconscionable letter;
One that perhaps, though well intended,
Should, twenty sheets ago, have ended.
So use your privilege—of dipping
Now here, now there—of sometimes skipping;
And if you feel your eyelids dropping
O'er lines unreadable,—of stopping.
Remember too, should spite and rage
Beset you more at every page,
There's fuel in these passive quires
Enough to light a dozen fires.

Ten ounces!—bless me! why 'twill cost
A fortune by the General post,
Unless I send a note to thank
My neighbour for an office-frank.

Or stay,—'twould hurt your feelings less
Perhaps, if trusted to the Press,
Under a plausible address;
And Julia is (to pose the many)
As good a *nom de guerre* as any.
Some folks receive the broadest hint
Without offence, if given in print;
And these by good advice may profit,
Though you, perhaps, think little of it.
When printed, far from being thrown
Away on you, my dear, alone,
Like scattered shot, the self-same words
May chance to hit a dozen birds.
Thus, many ruby-lipped and star-eyed ones,
Not only mistresses, but married ones,
Without a blush, may bear the blame
Of Julia's faults, in Julia's name.

For wherefore those alone reprove
Who deal in contraband of love;

And either thoughtlessly abuse
All they are destined soon to lose,
Or, mindful of a rainy day,
In Youth's full sunshine make their hay?
Since wives, alas! too often make
By chance or choice, a worse mistake.
Spite of the balances and checks
That should restrain the softer sex,
They aim, through struggles every hour
Renewed, at victory and power;
And, scorning gentle Influence, strive
To govern by Prerogative;
Till, weakened by an overstrain,
Snap goes the matrimonial chain!
'Tis true, the mystic knot, once tied,
Sets Law and Gospel on their side;
But, urged too strictly or too long,
The clearest right becomes a wrong;
And, as extremes for ever touch,
They forfeit all, who claim too much.

"There's magic in the nuptial Ring!"
So Fancy paints, and poets sing.
But magic, as 'tis understood
In conjuring-books, is bad and good;
In kindness practised, or in spite,
By scores of witches, black and white.
The Genie of that Ring (I'm loth
To own his trimming) dealt in both.
Hatred, and scorn, as well as love,
Within its narrow circle move;
And all,—love, hatred, joy, and mourning,
Depends upon the way 'tis worn in.

Thus Dervises (the tale is Persian;
Pray read it in the English version)
Were changed, by force of certain switches
Left-handed—into piles of riches!
But the poor blunderer, who struck
With the right-hand, had different luck.

For lo! to teach him how to judge ill,
Each Dervise, brandishing a cudgel,
With hard and heavy blows, instead
Of money, left the wretch for dead.

Enough. I'll not repeat the jokes
Worn thread-bare upon married folks.
Darts quite as pointed from *their* quivers
Are aimed, in turn, at single-livers;
Since who from blame can stand aloof,
Or what condition's laughter-proof?
Enough.—No longer I'll digress.
Back, Muse, from wedlock to the press.

The paths of printing are mysterious,
I own,—the consequences serious;
Stern censure, ridicule uncheck'd,
"Faint praise," and, worse than all—neglect;
The reader's frowns, the critic's stripes,
And other incidents of types,

When authors write to please themselves,
And copies sleep unsold on shelves.
But why stand shuddering on the brink?
Courage,—I'll venture,—swim or sink;
Past is the hour of hesitation;
So here (avaunt, deliberation!)
Off goes my packet in a hurry,
To take its chance with Mr. Murray.

Say, Julia, did you ever try
Your fortune in the lottery;
Where loss is easy to foretell,
And gain almost a miracle?—
How like, how very like, I feel
The Press is to a lottery-wheel!
Both have their traps, and flattering schemes,
And puffs almost as true as dreams.
Yet, though thus closely they agree,
However rash the' adventure be,

I'll curb my terror as it rises,
And risk my *numbers*—blanks, or prizes.

Julia, farewell! My words, I fear,
Fall blunted on your listless ear.
The best advice, like physic taken,
Leaves stubborn wills like yours unshaken.
Julia, farewell! In language warmer
'Twere idle to upbraid you, charmer;
Though, could I summon to my aid
And hold communion with the shade
Of Prior, Swift, or Matthew Green
Who warred against the monster, Spleen;
Or could my fingers wield the pen
Poetic of those *living* men,
Those bards, who, dear to all the Nine,
Heed not the praise of tongues like mine;
My Muse, no novice in her art,
Might, through your senses, reach your heart;

Like the sweet lark might upward spring,
And, not content with chirping, sing.
But no.—The' aspiring wish is vain.
Too feebly flows my humble strain,
Destined to leave you as it found you,
Spoiled by the flatterers who surround you!

Hence, thirsty quill.—Thou shalt not drink
Nor waste another drop of ink
In chiding,—for if not severe
My lecture, 'tis too long, I fear;
And, Julia, who can tell if you,
My dear, * will ever read it through,
Or reach my parting word——Adieu!

——— chi sa, se mai
Ti sovverrai di me!
METASTASIO.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Note 1, page 3, line 3.

Why have you thus poor Charles undone?

——— Sybarin cur properes amando
Perdere?———

Horace, Ode 8. Book I.

To this Ode, consisting of only sixteen lines, the author of these rhymes is indebted for the first conception of what he has endeavoured to execute. It occurred to him that, by filling up such an outline on a wider canvass, it might be possible to exhibit a picture, if imperfect not unfaithful, of modern habits and manners, and of the amusements and lighter occupations of the higher classes of society in England. The shortness of the Ode has tempted him to imitate it. Classical readers may not, perhaps, be

displeased at meeting with occasional allusions to a favourite author; while to others they will be, at the worst, indifferent, and may, as such, be passed over without injury to the Poem. They are distinguished in the text by marks of reference wherever they occur.

Note 2, page 6, lines 15 and 16.

Time was, he minded not a feather
If it was bright or cloudy weather.

——cur apricum
Oderit campum, patiens pulveris atque solis?

Note 3, page 7, lines 8 to 17.

Or on an Andalusian barb,
Alone, in military garb, &c.

Cur neque *militaris*
Inter æquales equitat; Gallica nec lupatis
Temperat ora frænis?

Note 4, page 11, lines 11 and 12.

Hence the smart miniatures enclosed
Of unknown candidates proposed.

These lines allude to what is said to have actually happened a few seasons ago. In a letter to one of the Patronesses, requesting a subscription for a

young lady then a stranger in London, came enclosed her portrait. But Beauty itself is seldom current in high life without the stamp of Fashion; and the device, though ingenious, was not successful.

Note 5, page 13, lines 13, &c.

If, in compassion to a building
Degraded by such paint and gilding, &c.

The Opera is a public establishment, and as such, the author, as one of the public, has freely given his opinion upon it. Towards the Manager he has not the least ill will, nor is he acquainted with him even by sight.

This Theatre, once so liberally and splendidly conducted, has gradually declined, until, far from being, as formerly, a school for music and dancing, it is now not even a brilliant assembly. Yet enormous sums are annually received, and, we are to presume, expended for its support; and the continent has been open, during the last five years, for the engagement of the best performers. The causes of this decline and fall are obvious enough; for its effects, the manager has only to refer to his list of subscribers, from whence most of the leading names

have been long since erased. Other Theatres depend for support on the Metropolis at large, but the Opera is the creature of Fashion. If not in fashion, it is nothing.

Some symptoms of better management, it is fair to admit, have lately appeared; some novelty has been produced; but much more must be accomplished before the Opera can regain its former reputation.

Note 6, page 33, lines 9 and 10.

Say, is the man to blame, or you,
That thus, he's never black and blue?

Neque jam *livida* gestat armis
Brachia.

Note 7, page 33, line 17.

He draws no bow,—except a long one.

Sæpe *trans finem* jaculo
Nobilis expedito.

Note 8, page 43, line 11.

Backed by the glittering skirts of London.

But O! what solemn scenes, on Snowdon's height
Descending slow, their *glittering skirts* unfold!
Gray.

Note 9, page 46, lines 5 and 6.

In vain the girls and deer so fallow
Sport on its banks, he swears 'tis yellow.

Cur timet *flavum* Tiberim tangere ?

Note 10, page 49, line 10.

So the Don *mingles with the* Thames.

Syrus in *Tiberim* defluxit *Orontes.*

Juvenal.

Note 11, page 50, lines 9 and 10.

"*Have you, my friend,*" *I've heard him say,*
"*Been lucky in your* turns *to-day ?*"—

A question actually put by a great master *en fait de Cravates* to one of his most promising pupils. The author is chargeable only with the rhymes, and with a little amplification.

Note 12, page 54, lines 1 and 2.

No more his well-brushed hair is sleek
With eau de miel, *or* huile antique.

—— cur *olivum*
Sanguine viperino
Cautius vitat ?—

Note 13, page 60, lines 11 and 12.

The Whig for female power and glory
As great a stickler as the Tory.

The divine right of Beauty is the only one an Englishman ought to acknowledge, and a pretty woman the only tyrant he is not authorised to resist.

Junius.

Note 14, page 64, lines 3 and 4.

Haste while you may. Behold, approaches
The last of yonder string of coaches.

The rule was till very lately settled that, even *after* half-past eleven, the whole string of coaches then formed in the street might deposit its contents in the ball-room. By this equitable construction many were admitted after midnight; but, now, the hour of limitation has been enlarged till twelve o'clock, and the privilege of the string abolished. Very nice points however arise, and are stoutly argued in favour of the string on *rainy nights*; and My Ladies The Judges are known to have been divided in their opinions.

Note 15, page 69, lines 3 and 4, &c.

Return blest days, or rather nights
Of dear ineffable delights, &c.

The balls here described are becoming matter of

history, and fortunate are those who do not recollect them. They were given at Egremont, now Cholmondeley-House in Piccadilly, on a scale of magnificence, and at a cost unheard of in these degenerate days."

Note 16, page 70, lines 15 and 16.

Who, though five hundred are set down,
Finds chickens' wings for all the town!

A request from some one at supper to be helped to the *leg* of a chicken, was, it seems, overheard by the mistress of the feast. "I should be sorry indeed," she is reported to have said, "if, in my house, there were not chickens' *wings* enough for every body at table!"

Note 17, page 85, line 6.

Strolling through Coblentz.

That part of the Boulevards, on the north side, between the Rue D'Artois, and the Rue Taitbout. At one end of it is the Café Hardy, and at the other the Café Tortoni. In fine summer-evenings it is lighted up, and then, though incredibly hot and dusty, much frequented as a promenade.

Note 18, page 95, line 10.

——*Dunan's Duchess.*

So created, somewhat hastily, by one of our lead-

ing English journals in the month of September, 1815, on the authority of an anonymous correspondent. Such waggeries are "pleasant, but wrong."

Note 19, page 95, line 12.

Old de R——, that veteran sinner.

A most ancient decoy-duck of the Salons de jeu.
Not to know *him* argues yourself unknown.

Note 20, page 96, line 14.

That oracle the card and pin.

These are placed regularly round the table, for the accommodation of the punters; and it is amusing to observe the diligence with which many of the gravest among them are engaged in pricking down every *coup*, during a whole evening; while they regulate their play according to the balance of blacks and reds, and the order in which those colours occur, with a hardihood of faith not unworthy of the middle ages.

Note 21, page 97, line 2.

"*Shift, like boiled lobsters, to the red.*"

And like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn.

Hudibras.

Note 22, page 98, line 3.

Now for my favourite Martingale.

A Martingale is when a punter, on losing his stake, doubles, or otherwise increases it in a certain progression, generally on the same colour. Martingales have been invented in great variety, and plans of very ingenious ones are occasionally purchased by credulous punters, as the certain means of winning. All of them would, in fact, succeed, were not the bank protected by the *Après*, and by refusing to cover a higher stake than twelve thousand franks. At this limit the Martingale, if not prematurely cut off by an *Après*, must die a natural death.

Note 23, page 99, line 4.

The Après with the' abhorred sheers.

Comes the blind Fury, with the' abhorred sheers,
And slits the thin-spun life.

Milton.

The Après is when the same number is turned up on both colours. Should that number be thirty-one, which happens, upon calculation, once in eight-and-twenty times, the Bank wins half the stake of all the punters; and consequently absorbs the whole, once in fifty-six times. "Monsieur," said an old habitué

of the Rouge-et-noir table to a young beginner, "dès que votre Napoleon a paru cinquante six fois,—il est *mangé!*"

Note 24, page 115, lines 1 and 2.

Seems with her fairy-foot to set
The stock, sweet-pea, and mignionette.

Where'er you tread, your foot shall set
The primrose, and the violet.

Hudibras.

Note 25, page 117, line 17.

Shot from yon Heavenly Bow at White's.

This bow has been lately repaired and new strung, since when it does more execution than ever. In plainer words the *bow-window* at White's is now enlarged, and affords a much better view than it did before of all that passes in the street.

Note 26, page 133, lines 1 and 2.

Dogs in the fancied chase grow hot,
And birds impatient to be shot.

Obscœnique canes, *importunæque* volucres.

Virgil.

In describing the signs that accompany the close

of a London season, the author has occasionally indulged in allusion to Virgil's description, in the first book of the Georgics, of the prodigies on the death of Julius Cæsar. It is enough to hint at a passage too long for insertion, and too strikingly poetical to be forgotten by any classical reader.

Note 27, page 135, lines 13 and 14, &c.

Let but a single spot begin
To stain the brightness of the skin, &c.

Tres rugæ subeant, et se cutis arida laxet,
Collige sarcinulas, dicet libertus, et exi.
Juvenal.

Note 28, page 161, lines 11 and 12.

Once (long ago and far away)
A Boy was thus disguised, they say.

Quid latet, ut marinæ
Filium dicunt Thetidis? &c.

Note 29, page 162, lines 17 and 18, &c.

Else in his rambles he might meet
Some bustling agent in the street, &c.

ne virilis
Cultus in cædem, et Lycias proriperet catervas.

Note 30, page 170, lines 7 and 8.

He may, *when all resources fail,*
Prefer—a patron to a jail.

There mark what ills the *scholar's* life assail;
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
Johnson.

The *politician* is more fortunate. *He* has generally his choice between these two last evils. The *scholar* too often encounters them both at once.

THE END.

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